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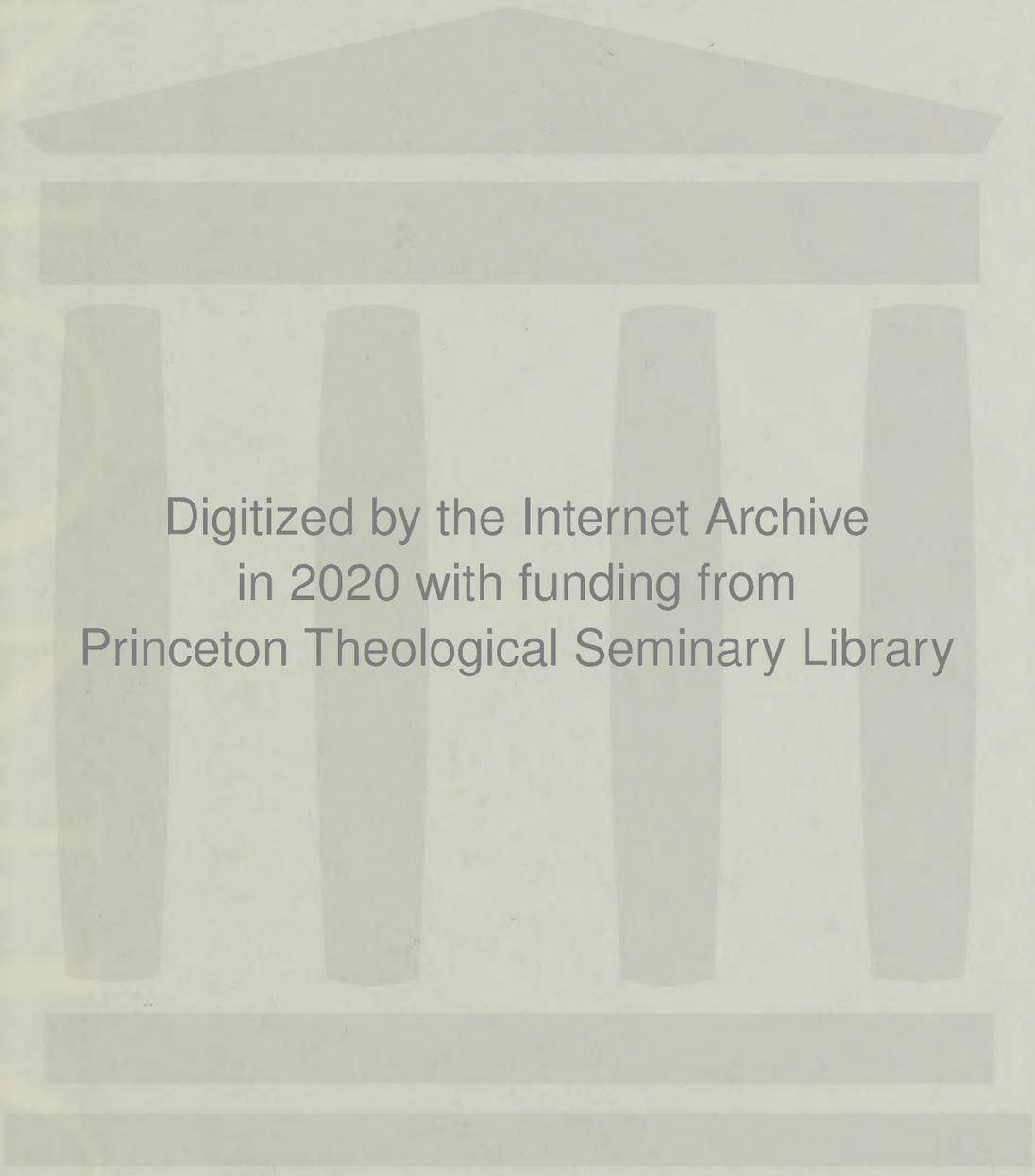

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Editorial

DAVID W. CONGDON

When the decision was made to hold the 2010 *Koinonia* Annual Forum (February 19, 2010) on the theme, "The Future of Creation," no one could have foreseen just how timely such a topic would be. Two months prior to the Forum, the United Nations held its notoriously unsuccessful summit on climate change in Copenhagen. Two months after the Forum, the *Deepwater Horizon* oil spill began in the Gulf of Mexico. More recently, as a result of their control of the House of Representatives following the midterm elections, Republicans decided to dissolve the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming. Finally, a December 30, 2010, post on a *New York Times* blog about the environment ran the headline, "An Evangelical Backlash Against Environmentalism," regarding the Cornwall Alliance. While a forum on the topic of creation would have been appropriate and worthwhile anyway, these and many other events confirm just how necessary such a dialogue was and continues to be.

As reflected in the papers presented, the title of the 2010 Forum holds a double meaning. It refers not only to the future of the natural world, but also to the future of theological and biblical reflection on the natural world. And as many, including Lynn White most famously, have claimed over the years, the latter has crucial implications for the former. The ambiguity of the title reflects the fact that how we think about the world is intimately tied up with how we act in and toward it. Care for the earth begins with care for the mind.

Essential to the future of creation is the future of the *doctrine* of creation, that is, the future of the church's reflection on what it means for God to be creator and for us to be created. The first two essays, by **Matthew J. Aragon Bruce** and **this writer** (both of Princeton Theological Seminary), are attempts to think critically and constructively about creation in light of Karl Barth's christocentric turn in modern theology. Bruce approaches the subject in the context of attempts by modern theologians to respond to the challenge of the scientific revolution. My essay

places Barth's contribution within the context of challenges to the traditional conception of *creatio ex nihilo*. Both essays find Barth's reconstruction of creation on the ground of christology to offer a significant resource for future reflection on this doctrine. Jesus Christ is the origin, ground, and telos of creation. A theology of creation is therefore not in competition with science, because the object of theological reflection is not the world as a natural object but rather humanity as the creature claimed and called by God. Creation exists as the theater of Christ's reconciling mission. In expounding these themes, Bruce focuses on Christ's resurrection as the promise of creation's future, whereas my essay makes a pneumatological and existential approach to Barth's doctrine of election the basis for re-conceiving *creatio ex nihilo* as *creatio continua ex electione*. In both cases, interest is deflected away from the question regarding the scientific *origin* of life to the ontological or soteriological *ground* of our life as covenant partners of God. Princeton Theological Seminary students, **Sung-Sup Kim** and **Melanie Webb**, offer penetrating and insightful responses to these essays. Kim raises questions about evil and providence, while Webb presents a pneumatological critique.

After these highly technical and systematic essays, the journal expands its interdisciplinary focus with two very different pieces on creation. **Daniel P. Castillo** of the University of Notre Dame re-narrates salvation history in terms of the human vocation of cultivating and caring for the earth. The result is that ecological theology and environmental ethics are grounded in soteriology, and likewise soteriology is seen to be inherently related to ecological concerns. Castillo helpfully traces the role of the city in the biblical narrative, especially as it relates to the notion of God's kingdom. He argues for an ethical and ecological reconfiguration of the *imago Dei* as the fulfillment of our vocation and thus as the telos of salvation history. **Elaine James** of Princeton Theological Seminary, on the other hand, traces the themes of creation and chaos in John Milton's *Paradise Lost* and the Song of Songs. James shows that, in both works, there is a vulnerability and tragic quality to paradise. Eden and chaos are not always easily distinguishable; there is a moral complexity intrinsic to the natural world. Creation, she thus argues, is "an erotic landscape . . . that involves us in moral choices about labor, cultivation, and land care." **Kenneth A.**

Reynhout of Princeton Theological Seminary offers a response to these articles using a typology from Willis Jenkins's *Ecologies of Grace*. Reynhout also responds to a third paper by Princeton Theological Seminary's **Nathaniel Van Yperen** that is not included in this journal.

Finally, in addition to the papers from the 2010 Forum, there is an article by **Adam W. Hearlson** of Princeton Theological Seminary on the implications of the later Heidegger's notions of place for the discipline of homiletics. Heidegger's concerns about technology and his emphasis on our physical situatedness are perhaps even more relevant today, in a world where the scientistic-capitalist machine of commodification threatens to turn the world's natural diversity into a mass-produced homogeneity disconnected from the particularities of land and culture. The need for a church attuned to the concrete aspects of physical location and place is more pressing than ever before.

The future of creation is not a topic with which we are ever finished. It is far more than just a conference theme; it is a global challenge that confronts all people with a moral, political, and intellectual crisis. To respond to this challenge requires responsible and creative reflection that presses beyond the old categories in pursuit of a fresh encounter with the subject-matter. Only in this way will we discover creative ways of addressing the problem of a present that often seems to be on the verge of foreclosing on the possibility of a future. The papers presented at the 2010 *Koinonia* Forum accomplished just that. Nevertheless, successful as it was, the Forum only touched on a portion of the vast array of issues surrounding the theme of creation. It is this journal's hope that these articles will serve as a catalyst for further interdisciplinary conversation on this important topic.

Though I serve as the journal's current Executive Editor, I was only a participant in the 2010 Forum. My sincerest thanks and appreciation go to **Kara J. Lyons-Pardue**, the previous Executive Editor, not only for organizing this gathering but for her two years of hard work and dedication to the journal. Additional thanks belong to the Production Editor, Shannon Nicole Smythe, who assisted Kara in putting together the Forum and the journal and continues to assist me in my role as editor. Her work has been indispensable to *Koinonia*. Of course, the publication of this journal is the result of significant teamwork throughout the year. I

thank the authors, respondents, book reviewers, and the entire editorial board for their commitment and hard work. Without their considerable contributions to *Koinonia*, my work would be fruitless and impossible. Furthermore, I want to thank the members of Princeton Theological Seminary's administration for their continued support of their doctoral students and our journal.

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Freedom for Creation: Creation and Its Future according to Karl Barth

MATTHEW J. ARAGON BRUCE

In this essay, I seek to sketch an answer to the question, "what is the future of creation?" by drawing upon the theology of Karl Barth. The essay has three major sections: First I consider (selectively) the history of the doctrine of creation in the modern period, giving special attention to the rise of modern science and its relationship with theology, in order to situate Barth's doctrine contextually and understand some of the problems and questions to which he was responding. The second section consists of an explication of Barth's understanding of the triune act of creation. In the final section, I develop an account of the future of creation, in particular the eschatological role of human beings, building upon the eschatology Barth develops in *Church Dogmatics*[1] II/1 within his treatment of the divine attribute of glory.

I

Karl Barth's doctrine of creation is rooted in Christology. Barth relates the two doctrines in a very specific sense; more precisely, he understands creation as the necessary space for the occurrence of the incarnation. Put differently, creation was created for the sake of the incarnation of Jesus

1 Karl Barth, *Die kirchliche Dogmatik*, 4 vols. in 13 parts (Zollikon-Zürich: Evangelischer Verlag A. G., 1932–1970); hereafter cited as *KD*. ET Karl Barth, *Church Dogmatics*, ed. G. W. Bromiley and T. F. Torrance, 4 vols. in 13 parts (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1956–1975); hereafter cited as *CD*. I have freely modified the existing translation of the *Church Dogmatics* throughout.

Christ. The primary purpose of creation is the incarnation; the rest of creation has its purpose in Christ.

Traditionally, the doctrine of creation has contained a series of assertions concerning the origin of the world. However, the question arises in the modern period of what exactly the genre of such assertions is. Is the doctrine of creation primarily an exercise of natural science, an article of faith, or some sort of combination of the two? For the majority of Christian history, theologians ascribed to the latter view. From the early Church through the post-Reformation period, natural science in the western world was largely a happy mixture of Aristotelian-Ptolemaic science and a biblical worldview. These two outlooks coincided rather nicely in their ability to square a largely literal reading of the Genesis account of creation with empirical observations of the natural world (a few differences existed, such as the denial of *creatio ex nihilo* by the Aristotelians, but Christian Europe easily adapted and adjusted the Aristotelian-Ptolemaic worldview to jive with the biblical narrative).

With the ascendency of the natural sciences following the scientific revolution in the seventeenth century, all of this changed and the period of friendly concord between theology and the natural sciences ended. The new science was not so smoothly reconciled with the biblical narratives, and soon multiple controversies arose. Initially, theologians passionately defended the biblical worldview against the new science. They did so not from "simple narrow-mindedness," but rather, because they understood that "the trustworthiness of Scripture was at stake in this controversy and with it the authority of God himself."[2] Throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, theologians continued to attempt to reconcile the Genesis account with new developments in the natural sciences. Theologians simply could not let go of the notion that the Genesis account had something to do with natural science, that it was a sort of empirical description of the origin and development of the world.

An example of this can be found in the influential Dogmatics lectures of the Wittenberg Theologian Franz Volkmar Reinhard (1753–1812).

2 Klaus Scholder, *Ursprünge und Probleme der Bibelkritik im 17. Jahrhundert: Ein Beitrag zur Entstehung der historisch-kritischen Theologie* (München: Christian Kaiser Verlag, 1966), 56. It is for this reason that we should not be too quick to blame our theological predecessors for what seems like mere stubborn dogmatism.

Reinhard attempted to defend a literal interpretation of the Genesis account by arguing, "why the common understanding of Moses' narrative can no longer be endorsed" (by "common understanding" he meant the belief that the universe is only 6,000 years old).[3] Contrary to the common understanding of his contemporaries, Reinhard argued that it is only Genesis 1:1 that refers to the creation of the universe. With v. 2, Moses begins to narrate the formation of the earth alone—the six day account is of the earth only, and not the entire universe—and the earth itself, at least the material of which it is composed, already existed: vv. 2 and following only narrate God giving the earth its form.[4] Reinhard continued further, suggesting that the term "day" need not be taken literally and could refer to geological periods. In short, Reinhard viewed the Genesis account as a piece of natural history and contended it was so intended by its author (he does not question that it was Moses) such that it could operate as a second source of knowledge concerning the origins of the universe alongside the knowledge ascertained via the natural sciences.

However, it did not take long for at least some theologians to realize that this sort of accommodationist method in relation to science could not continue, for eventually natural scientists would be able to explain the origins of the universe itself without recourse to God or any concept of a personal first mover.[5] In this vein, Friedrich Schleiermacher was one of the first to recognize that the doctrine of creation must be reformulated anew such "that it remains free from entanglements with science."[6] Schleier-

3 Franz Volkmar Reinhard, *Vorlesungen über die Dogmatik: mit literärischen Zusätzen*, 5th ed., ed. Johann Gottfried Immanuel Berger and Heinrich August Schott (Sulzbach: J. C. von Seidel Kunst und Buchhandlung, 1824), 176: "Die Gründe anzeigen, warum die gewöhnliche Art Mosis Erzählung zu verstehen, nicht wohl zugelassen werden kann. Es sind folgende: wird dabey ohne Beweis angenommen, daß Moses die Entstehung des Universums habe beschreiben wollen."

4 Reinhard, *Vorlesungen über die Dogmatik*, 176–77.

5 A realization that cannot be argued but to have been confirmed today, there is no need to appeal to any second source of knowledge for the origins of the universe, the natural sciences can entirely account for the origins of the observable universe.

6 Friedrich D. E. Schleiermacher, *On the Glaubenslehre: Two Letters to Dr. Lücke*, trans. James Duke and Francis Fiorenza (Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1981), 64. In this regard Schleiermacher stated, and no doubt with Reinhard and like thinkers in mind, that "I can only anticipate that we must learn to do without what many are still accustomed to regard as inseparably bound to the essence of Christianity. I am not referring to the six-day creation, but to the concept of creation itself, as it is usually understood, apart from any reference to the Mosaic chronology and despite all those rather precarious rationalizations that

macher's statement points to the need for a reconsideration of the doctrine of creation such that it no longer be pursued as the attempt to accommodate the biblical narrative to current developments in natural science. Schleiermacher notes that it is necessary to recognize that, to the degree to which the author(s) of the Genesis creation narrative intended it as a *scientific* cosmogony, they simply fail, because as such the account is errant. What is required—and modern Protestant theology has consistently recognized this—is a *theological* cosmogony, i.e., an account of the origins of the universe that, rather than depending on the scientific value of its details, depends for its success on its explication and confirmation of the Christian understanding of God and God's relationship to creation, and in particular to human beings.[7]

This essay is concerned with Barth's theological cosmogony. According to Barth—and here he is plainly following the modern path pioneered by Schleiermacher and others—a theological account of creation is not about the origins of the world in terms of the descriptive empirical methods of the natural sciences (e.g., the details of how elements were first formed, or how galaxies or the earth were formed, or how plants and animals and human beings came to exist in their present state). Such investigations are examples of good human pursuits; they are valuable in themselves, and we honor God in pursuing them. However, they are pursued independently of theology, understood as the science of God, and vice versa. A theological doctrine of creation does not attempt to answer chemical or biological questions about the origins of life nor physics questions about the origin of matter and the formation of our galaxy. Rather, a doctrine of creation addresses, above all, two main tenets: (1) there is something else other than God, and (2) God has willed this something else into existence. Both of these principles are a continuation of the doctrine of God.[8] Throughout the history of theology, doctrines of creation have maintained these

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interpreters have devised. How long will the concept of creation hold out against the power of a world-view constructed from undeniable scientific conclusions that no one can avoid" (60–61).

7 Cf., Wolfhart Pannenberg, *Systematic Theology*, Vol. 2, trans. Geoffrey Bromiley (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1994), xv and passim.

8 In a doctrine of creation God is still the primary subject matter, but rather than the being of God and the divine attributes or perfections, the topic is now God's relationship with creation, the something else besides God.

two tenets (and creation has usually been placed immediately after the doctrine of God in dogmatics texts for this very reason). However, once the break is made with natural science in the modern period, these two principles are freed to address the question of (1) who God, the creator of the world, is and (2) what the nature of God's relationship with creation is, apart from worries that arise when the doctrine of God is confused with questions of the natural origins of the universe (theology is freed to be a true *scientia Dei* rather than a *mixophysicotheologia*). In other words, the question now becomes, not how but why did God create the world? What does creation mean for God, and what does the fact that God creates and created this particular universe mean for creation—namely, creatures and particularly we human beings?

There are generally two answers to the question of why God created the world: (1) for God's own sake, or (2) for ours, for the sake of creatures. Usually these two answers are combined in some way. God creates out of his abundant and overflowing goodness and love and to manifest his own glory and perfection to creatures. This combination of the two answers has a long pedigree and has no better representative than Irenaeus: "For the glory of God is the living human being while the life of the human being is the vision of God."[9]

The temptation in modern theology however, has been to emphasize the "for-our-sakes" and to focus almost entirely on God's overflowing love as the impetus behind creation. In order to illustrate the problems with this modern temptation and to illuminate Barth's response, I will briefly consider two "modern stumbles," that of the nineteenth-century Lutheran theologian Gottfried Thomasius[10], and that of the early Barth himself.

Thomasius criticizes the scholastic tradition (of which he considers the chief representative to be Anselm):

> the teaching [of the tradition] that the glory of God is the ultimate end of creation appears to me to confuse the consequence with the ground. For although creation is the glorification of God, because the creaturely

9 Irenaeus of Lyons, *Adversus Haereses*, IV.20.7, from *Fontes Christiani* 8/4, ed. and trans. Norbert Brox (Freiburg: Herder, 1997), 166: "gloria enim Dei vivens homo, vita autem hominis visio Dei."

10 I owe the example of Thomasius to Robert Jenson, see his *Systematic Theology*, Vol. 2 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 18.

> image is his δόξα, what moves him to create, is not this glorification of himself, which he does not need, but love alone.11

Thomasius is right that God does not need our glorification but that he nevertheless values the knowledge, love, and glory we offer. However, the reason for this is that God is worthy of our love and glorification. God values our love because ultimately he values and loves himself as that which should be valued and loved above all else. So God's work of creation is about both his love for creatures and the self-manifestation of his glory, the two of which, as Irenaeus rightly understood, are ultimately equivalent.

Thomasius's one-sided emphasis on the external love of God for creation divorced from the self-manifestation of God's glory points to a second problem, the absence of Christology. Here too Irenaeus will serve as our guide: "Since the Savior was pre-existent, it was necessary that what was to be saved come to be, so that the Savior should not exist in vain."[12] Thomasius' emphasis on God's love to the exclusion of God's self-manifestation of his glory is inconsistent with the form of God's love of the world. How does God love the world? By sending the Son. In Thomasius's conception of love alone as God's motivation for creation, space is made for a relationship between God and creation independent of Jesus Christ. Christ's redemptive relationship with creation becomes a backup plan for what must be taken as a failed experiment on God's part in which the good creation ceases to be good and must be repaired. In addition, it raises the question of what God loved prior to creation. Thomasius states, and we can only agree, that God loved himself—i.e., that there is love among the triune persons. But this in turn raises the question of how then the intertriune love is related to God's externally directed love for creation?

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11 Gottfried Thomasius, *Christi Person und Werk: Darstellung der evangelisch-lutherischen Dogmatik*, Vol. I, 3rd ed., ed. F. F. Winter (Erlangen: Verlag von Andreas Deichert, 1886), 144: "Die seit Anselm gewöhnliche Zweckangabe: gloria Dei est finis ultimis creationisi scheint mir die Konsequenz mit dem Grunde zu verwechseln. Denn allerdings ist die Schöpfung Verherrlichung Gottes, weil kreatürliches Abbild seiner δόξα, aber was ihn bewegt sie zu schaffen, ist nicht diese Verherrlichung seiner selbst, deren er nicht bedarf, sondern allein die Leibe."

12 Irenaeus of Lyons, *Adversus Haereses*, III.22.3, from *Fontes Christiani* 8/3 ed. and trans. Norbert Brox (Freiburg: Herder, 1995), 278: "Cum enim praeexisteret salvans, oportebat et quod salvaretur fieri, uti non vacuum sit salvans."

The second less-than-successful example is from Barth's so-called *Göttingen Dogmatics*. The *Leitsatz* of the section on creation reads:

> To know God means to know the One who is so completely other than the world, i.e., as everything which is he is not, so superior to it, so much its Lord, that He is its Creator, who has called heaven and earth with time and space into reality out of nothing according to his thought by the free will of his love for his honor and therefore as the world of human beings and in relationship to this his very good purpose.[13]

Here too we must note the absence of Christology. The material principle of Barth's early doctrine of creation is the wholly otherness of God. Creation is regarded as good, but what is important about the doctrine of creation is that creation is qualitatively distinct from God, who is infinitely superior to it and reigns over it as its creator. The doctrine functions primarily as the bridge between the attributes of God and God's relationship with his creation. There is no problem with this in itself. Yet in Barth's early outworking of the doctrine, it functions at a level of generality that does not pay sufficient attention to the particularity of God and his relationship with creation centered in the person of Jesus Christ. This is precisely what Barth does in the *Church Dogmatics*.

II

The development in Barth's thought between his earlier and later work (about twenty-three years separate the doctrine of creations in the two works) is immediately apparent from an even superficial comparison of the introductory *Leitsätze*. In the *Church Dogmatics*, Barth begins the doctrine of creation with the thesis:

> The insight that humanity owes its existence and form, together with all the reality distinct from God, to God's creation, is achieved only in the reception and response of the divine self-witness, i.e., only in faith

13 Karl Barth, *Unterricht in der christlichen Religion, Teil 2: Die Lehre von Gott / Die Lehre vom Menschen 1924/25* (GA II.20), ed. Hinrich Stoevesandt (Zürich: Theologischer Verlag Zürich, 1990), 213: "Gott erkennen heißt den erkennen, der so sehr anders ist als die Welt, d.h. als Alles, was nicht er ist, so sehr ihr überlegen, so sehr ihr Herr, daß er ihr Schöpfer ist, der Himmel und Erde mit der Zeit und dem Raume aus dem Nichts in ihre Wirklichkeit gerufen nach seinen Gedanken durch den freien Willen seiner Liebe, zu seiner Ehre und darum als Welt des Menschen und im Verhältnis zu diesem seinem Zweck sehr gut."

> in Jesus Christ, in the knowledge of the unity of Creator and creature actualized in him, and in the life in the present mediated by him, under the right and in the experience of the goodness of the Creator vis-à-vis his creature.[14]

Here too as in the *Göttingen Dogmatics*, the doctrine of creation directly follows the doctrine of God. But the doctrine of God is no longer conceptualized independently of the person of Jesus Christ and thus neither is creation. The material principle of the doctrine of creation has now become Christology, particularly the free election of God to be both God and for human beings in the person of Jesus Christ.

The influence of Barth's doctrine of election on his doctrine of creation is best understood through careful attention to one of the key slogans of the *Church Dogmatics*: "creation is the external basis of the covenant and the covenant is the internal basis of creation." This slogan is Barth's shorthand way of explaining God's relationship with creation. The covenant that God establishes with himself and the creature has precedence over the act of creation. God establishes a covenant in eternity (i.e., prior to creation) with Jesus Christ. For Barth, the biblical witness attests that

> the purpose and therefore the meaning of creation is . . . to make possible the history of God's covenant with human beings, which has its beginning, its center, and its end in Jesus Christ. The history of the covenant is just as much the goal of creation as creation itself is the beginning of this history.[15]

In other words, creation can be understood correctly only in light of the covenant of which it is the result. Barth understands creation as "an incomparable act," of God, an act that tells us,

> God is the one who, although wholly self-sufficient in his possession of all perfections, and absolutely glorious and blessed in his inner life, did not as such will to be alone, and has not actually remained alone, but in accordance with his own will, and under no other inward constraint

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14 Karl Barth, *CD* III/1, 3; *KD* III/1, 1: "Die Einsicht, daß der Mensch sein Dasein und Sosein mit aller von Gott verschiedenen Wirklichkeit zusammen der Schöpfung Gottes zu verdanken hat, vollzieht sich allein im Empfang und in der Beantwortung des göttlichen Selbstzeugnisses, d. h. allein im Glauben an Jesus Christus: in der Erkenntnis der in ihm verwirklichten Einheit von Schöpfer und Geschöpf und in dem durch ihn vermittelten Leben in der Gegenwart, unter dem Recht und in der Erfahrung der Güte des Schöpfers seinem Geschöpf gegenüber."

15 *CD* III/1, 42; *KD* III/1, 44.

> than that of the freedom of his love, has, in an act of the overflowing of his inward glory, posited as such a reality which is distinct from himself.[16]

The incomparability of the act of creation informs our understanding of the relationship between God and creation. The relationship between creator and creature is understood as one of radical inequality. Barth retains his notion of God as wholly other from his early work, but it is transformed by his renewed understanding of the Trinity and Christology. The relationship between creator and creature can be understood only in the irreversible order from creator to creature. Creation is an

> absolutely contingent event which we can comprehend and deduce neither from God nor from the world; only as the secret of the actuality of the Creator and the creature, of their association, and of the indissoluble order of their association. However things may stand between God on the one side and the world and man on the other, this presupposition is always the basis. And whatever may happen between these two, this act will always be the background. In this sense God will always be the Creator, and all reality distinct from Him will always be His creature.[17]

To this point, Barth has said little that is unexpected and which cannot be found throughout the tradition. However, his next point pushes beyond the tradition. He argues that the creator-creature relationship that has been "established, determined and limited" in the incomparable and irreversible divine act of creation, "corresponds externally to the inner life of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. It is the execution of the contingent free decision of God in his gracious election."[18] God's gracious love of creation is not an addition to God's inter-triune being. This love is already proper to God's being. Elsewhere, Barth puts it this way:

> God repeats in this relationship *ad extra* a relationship proper to himself in his inner divine essence. Entering into this relationship, he makes a copy of himself. Even in his inner divine being there is relationship. To be sure, God is one in himself. But he is not alone. There is in him a co-existence, co-inherence and reciprocity. God in himself is not just simple, but in the simplicity of His essence he is threefold—the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. He posits himself, is posited by himself, and confirms himself in both respects, as his own origin and also as his own

16 *CD* III/1, 15; *KD* III/1, 14–15.

17 *CD* III/1, 16; *KD* III/1, 15.

18 *CD* III/1, 16; *KD* III/1, 15.

> goal. He is in himself the one who loves eternally, the one who is eternally loved, and eternal love . . . . And it is this relationship in the inner divine being which is repeated and reflected in God's eternal covenant with man as revealed and operative in time in the humanity of Jesus.[19]

Barth's conception of the covenant must be understood in this sense. The primal decision in which God determines his being as triune is the same decision in which God determines himself to be God for us. The eternal inter-trinitarian love between the members of the Trinity is such that it involves a creature, albeit a creature who is also divine, Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ is the very freedom of God; and when we consider him, "we have to do with something ontological."[20] God self-determined himself to be God only with this man, to irreversibly unite himself to this creature such that God would no longer be God without him. Apart from the union of humanity and divinity in the incarnate Word, God would be something other than the God revealed to us in Jesus Christ.

In sum, Barth's position is that creation is the necessary space required for God to have a relationship with creatures and particularly one creature, Jesus Christ. However, the covenant relationship has priority. Barth's claim is that God's covenant with creation, with human beings, and with Jesus Christ precedes creation. Creation is the required space for the covenant to occur. God does not create first and then decide to have a relationship with creatures, and with humans especially, and with and in and through Jesus Christ in particular. The order is precisely the opposite. God decides to be in relationship first with the particular human being Jesus Christ, in and through him with other human beings, and then with creation as a whole. The result of this decision is God's creation, performed in order to actualize the willed relationship with Christ. Christ's life and work are the reason for creation. This understanding leads to the conclusion that the very purpose and content of creation is God's decision to become incarnate in the person of Jesus Christ on behalf of fallen humanity.

Thus, in an explanation of the goodness of creation, Barth argues that both the bright and dark sides of creation are good: when we aim to affirm God's declaration that his creation is good, we must recognize that this

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19 *CD* III/2, 218–19; *KD* III/2, 260–61.

20 *CD* III/2, 210; *KD* III/2, 251.

refers to both the salvation and the sin from which we and the world need to be redeemed.[21] However, we must continue to consider creation in light of the covenant that God has established with us and creation, for in this light "the witness of being [*Dasein*] itself . . . is never so plainly negative and therefore serious, shocking, and mortifying as to be able to displace us in and bind us to the sorrow which God has determined for us in order to make us truly happy."[22]

Throughout the *Church Dogmatics*, Barth's primary concern is to show that Christ's work, his death and resurrection for sinners, should never be understood as a contingency plan introduced because of the unfortunate and perhaps unforeseen failure of God's original plan for creation. God's eternal plan for creation and as such that which makes it good is the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Put simply, the content of the eternal covenant of God is the story of Jesus Christ depicted in the Gospels with the resurrection being the purpose and climax of God's plan.[23]

If the resurrection is the ultimate good, the crucifixion must be the penultimate good—for who would be resurrected if there were not someone who died? And the fact that the Crucifixion also atones for sin should go some way to assuaging some the theodicy problems that have no doubt arisen with the above few paragraphs. While questions, concerns, and rejections will no doubt still occur, such implications are the only logically possible ones in line with Barth's declaration:

> The Son of God, who decided to give himself from all eternity, who with the Father and the Holy Spirit chose to unite himself with the lost Son of man; and this lost Son of man, who from all eternity was the object of the election of the Father Son and Holy Spirit. The reality of this eternal being together of the God and man is a concrete decision. Its content has one name and is one person. His name is Jesus Christ.[24]

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21 Cf. *CD* III/1, 368–75; *KD* III/1, 422–30.

22 *CD* III/1, 429; *KD* III/1, 429: "das Zeugnis des Daseins selbst und als solches nicht eindeutig ist, daß seine Stimme so einhellig negativ und also ernst, erschütternd und demütigend niemals laut wird, daß sie uns in die Traurigkeit zu versetzen und in ihr festzuhalten vermöchte, die Gott uns bestimmt hat, um uns wirklich froh zu machen."

23 Cf. *CD* IV/1, 54; *KD* IV/1, 57.

24 *CD* II/2, 154; *KD* II/2, 172: "Der Gottessohn, der sich selbst von Ewigkeit her herzugeben beschloß, der mit dem Vater und dem Heiligen Geiste sich selbst erwählte zur Einheit mit dem verlorenen Menschensohn und dieser verlorene Menschensohn, der von Ewigkeit her der Gegenstand der Erwählung des Vaters, des Sohnes und des Heiligen Geistes war: die Wirklichkeit dieses ewigen Zusammenseins von Gott und Mensch ist ein konkreter

The affirmation that the beginning, center, and end of creation is the resurrection of Jesus Christ points to another tenet of the doctrine of creation. We have seen that the doctrine of creation demonstrates that there is something else other than God and that God wills this something else into existence. Additionally, the life of Christ and particularly his resurrection demonstrate that creation has an end, a goal, or in other words, a future. That future is God. God alone can be the future of creation. The only other option would be the nothingness from which creation has come. But this is not the end for which God created. God created in order that there would be a partner with which he might live. This end for which God created the world is integral to his own being, and ultimately we must state that God has determined his own existence for this life with creation.

III

One of the major concerns of Barth's theology is to demonstrate that God is in and for himself who he is for us. To conceive of God otherwise undermines the assurance of our salvation because it introduces a gap into the life of God, the possibility that God is other in eternity than he is for us in history. *Church Dogmatics* II/1 contains Barth's treatment of attributes (perfections) of God. The final two attributes Barth treats in §31.3 are eternity and glory (*Herrlichkeit*). Barth's discussion of these two attributes includes a sketch of the eschatological end of creation that serves to address our question concerning creation's future.

According to Barth, God's eternity is the pure duration of the sovereignty and majesty of his being as the one who loves in freedom. Beginning, succession, and end are not distinct elements in God but rather are one simultaneous occasion. Barth has in mind Revelation 1:8 throughout this section: "'I am the Alpha and the Omega, says the Lord God, 'who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty.'" Where these three

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Beschluß. Sein Inhalt hat einen Namen und ist eine Person. Er heißt und ist Jesus Christus . . . ."

temporalities are distinguished and separated from one another there is time; "Therefore," says Barth, "eternity is not time."[25]

Time, Barth explains, is a creation of the triune God as the basis for his free *opera ad extra*.[26] Eternity, on the other hand, is the basis for God's free action within the triune relationship. Time has no power over God; rather he is the Lord of time. Whereas we are had by time, God has time.[27] Furthermore, Barth argues that eternity is solely God's possession: "even in God's fellowship with his creature, this eternity still belongs to God . . . [the creature] does not . . . become God and therefore eternal itself."[28]

In distinction from the classical tradition, Barth does not think of God's eternity as the mere negation of time, i.e., timelessness. Eternity has a past, a present, and a future. The difference between eternity and time is that these three temporal elements perdure simultaneously ("pure duration") in the former, unlike the fleeting nature of the present, the departure of the past, and the unavailability of the future in the latter. The notion that there is past, present, and future in eternity, succession, and movement is rightly understood only when we make explicit that eternity is a perfection of the triune God.[29]

Eternity, writes Barth, is "first and foremost God's time and therefore real time."[30] Eternity then is divine time, but it is not to be understood in terms of mere contradistinction to or as incapable of created time. God is also involved in created time. The definitive loci from which to understand God's time and his relation to created time is of course the Incarnation: "That the Word became flesh undoubtedly means also that eternity, without ceasing to be eternity, even in its *power* as eternity, became time. Became time!"[31] In the event of the Incarnation God not only gave us time, i.e., created time, but also "God takes time to himself . . . he himself, the eternal one, becomes temporal, in the form of our own existence and our

25 *CD* II/1, 608; *KD* II/1, 685.

26 Cf. *CD* III/1, §41.2.

27 Cf. Robert W. Jenson, *Alpha and Omega: A Study in the Theology of Karl Barth* (New York: Thomas Nelson & Sons, 1963), 76.

28 *CD* II/1, 609; *KD* II/1, 687.

29 Cf. *CD* II/1, 615; *KD* II/1, 693.

30 *CD* II/1, 613; *KD* II/1, 691.

31 *CD* II/1, 616; *KD* II/1, 694.

own world . . . submitting himself to it, and allows created time to become and be the forms of his eternity."[32] In Barth's understanding, created time is a mirror image of divine time, eternity. Time then, either God's or created, has its foundation in the triune God.

Simply put, God has time. He is not timeless in the sense of a lack of succession and movement in himself, nor is his relationship to us a conflict of eternity and time. Far from being apart from time, God not only has time within himself, but also has time for us and includes our time within himself. According to Barth, the eternity of God requires the theologian to contemplate God's glory. This is because "the being of God, his mere abstract being, is not eternal as such—God does not even have such being, rather his being is eternal in glory."[33] In other words, the glory of God is inclusive of the other divine perfections.[34] Thus, it must be treated last, for only after reflection on the other attributes is it possible to recognize that God's glory is his right and his power "to act as God."[35] God's glory is his right and power to act as God and therefore, according to Barth, it is his power and right to make himself known:

> God's Glory is . . . God himself in the truth, in the capacity, in the act in which he reveals himself. This truth, this capacity, this act is the triumph, the innermost core of his freedom. And at this innermost core it is freedom to love. For in this innermost core, in his glory therefore, he is the one who seeks and finds community, creating, maintaining, and ruling it. He is in himself and for that reason also to what is external to

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32 *CD* II/1, 616; *KD* II/1, 694.

33 *CD* II/1, 640; *KD* II/1, 722.

34 Cf. Cornelis van der Kooi, *As in a Mirror: John Calvin and Karl Barth on Knowing God: A Diptych*, trans. Donald Mader, *Studies in the History of Christian Traditions* (Leiden: Brill, 2005), 360–61. Barth's affirmative citation of Polanus is illustrative at this point: "The glory of God is his essential majesty, by which it is understood that it is in reality the case that he is in his essence really what he is said to be: most simple, most perfect, infinite, eternal, boundless, immutable, living, immortal, blessed, wise, intelligent, omniscient, prudent, willing, good, gracious, loving the good, merciful, just, true, holy, pure, powerful, more correctly, all-powerful, and that he declares himself such in all his works. In brief, the essence of the glory of God are the powers existing in God himself and reflected in his works." *KD* II/1, 725–26.

35 Cf. *CD* II/1, 641; *KD* II/1, 723: "God's glory is—thus we can retrospectively say—his competence, as omnipresent to make use of his omnipotence, the power to exercise his ever-present knowledge and will in lordship." See also, *KD* II/1, 725: "it is the self-revealing *epitome of all divine perfections*. It is the fullness of God's divinity; it is the erupting, self-externalizing, self-manifesting reality of everything that God is. It is the essence of God, in so far as this is in itself an essence that reveals itself."

> him, relationship, the ground and the archetype of all relationship. As he is glorious, he loves.[36]

God's glory is the content of his self-revelation, and as such it is the source and content of humanity's salvation. Thus it is only logical that in his reflection on the glory of God, Barth makes clear the significance of the doctrine of God for the reconciliation and redemption of creation.

Barth understands the glory of God to be the archetype of all relationships, including, of course, God's own relationship with human beings. The eternal relationship between the Father and the Son in the Spirit precedes all the external works of the Triune God and is the archetype of the covenant relationship between God and humanity. Jesus Christ is the "beginning, center, and goal" of all God's works.[37] He is the beginning, because the co-existence of the triune persons, particularly the relationship between the Father and Son in the Spirit, is the basis for God's co-existence with human beings. He is the center, because the union of God and humanity and the reconciliation accomplished by Christ is the ultimate occasion of the revelation of God's glory. Finally, Jesus is the goal of the works of divine glory because

> God's glory as his externalization can only come to its end (which still as such cannot be an end) in that he will be external in his Sonship, in his lordship, in the fulfillment of his office and mission, that all things will be to him in his Son as they are also in him.[38]

Again,

> God's glory is not exhausted by what God is in himself, nor by the fact that from eternity and in eternity he is not only internal but external. God's glory is also the answer awakened and elicited by God himself of the worship offered to him by his creature in so far that in his utter creatureliness this is the echo of God's voice.[39]

The "also" indicates the twofold claim made by Barth. Both claims are rooted in Jesus Christ, for it is only in view of him as "the beginning, center, and end of God's works . . . that there is such divine-creaturely wor-

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36 *CD* II/1, 641; *KD* II/1, 723.

37 *CD* II/1, 667; *KD* II/1, 753.

38 *CD* II/1, 667; *KD* II/1, 752.

39 *CD* II/1, 667–68; *KD* II/1, 753, emphasis mine.

ship, a *glorificatio* which itself and as such originates from the *gloria Dei* and participates in it."[40]

First, God is both internal and external to eternity. God's glory is never simply contained within himself but eternally radiates outward. In Jesus Christ, God eternally goes out from himself. This going out is the basis of God's relationship with creation and human beings in particular. It is so not only formally; it is the material basis of the God-human relationship, its very possibility. The covenant between God and humanity is established eternally in God's going out from himself in Jesus Christ. The basis for Barth's doctrine of election in *Church Dogmatics* II/2 and the full development of the covenant in *Church Dogmatics* III/1–2 is established here in the reflection on divine glory. The eternal being of the triune God is the elected covenant relationship between the Father and Jesus Christ in the Holy Spirit.[41]

God's eternal glory is revealed to us in Jesus Christ. What is revealed is the power and capacity for God to act as God. God is shown to be capable of creatureliness without diminishing his divinity. This capacity for creatureliness is established in pre-temporality—prior to creation—in the relationship between God and Jesus Christ in the Spirit. This relationship endures eternally, and thus Barth can refer to the glorification of God on the part of the creature as only supplementary.[42]

This leads to a second point: God's glory has an echo in creation. Creation is a mirror that reflects God's glory back to him and as such glorifies him. But Barth asks,

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40 *CD* II/1, 668; *KD* II/1, 753.

41 Barth states in *CD* II/1, 157–158; *KD* II/2, 171: "In the beginning with God, i.e. in the resolve of God which precedes the existence, the possibility and the reality of all his creatures, the very first thing is the decree whose realization means and is Jesus Christ. The decree is perfect both in subject and object. It is the electing God and also the elected man Jesus Christ. . . . This is the covenant of grace which is perfected and sealed in the power of God's free love, established openly and unconditionally by God Himself and confirmed with a faithfulness that has no reserve. . . . God's glory overflows in this supreme act of his freedom. . . . The Son of God determined to give Himself from all eternity. With the Father and the Holy Spirit He chose to unite himself with the lost Son of Man. *The Son of Man was from all eternity the object of election of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.* And the reality of this eternal decree being together of God and man is a concrete decree. It has as its content one name and person. This decree is Jesus Christ."

42 Cf. *CD* II/1, 668; *KD* II/1, 754.

> Certainly what the creature does in its new creatureliness, which in Jesus Christ has become thanksgiving directed to God is the glorification of God,—but how should this as a creaturely work, in that is done in Jesus Christ in the life of his Church, be able to occur outside of the glory of God itself and without it?[43]

How is it possible for human beings to truly worship God when

> must we not confess our unlikeliness, opposition to God even, of our own voice and our inability to glorify God? . . . thereto, that we . . . also cannot hear every echo in the chorus of the other creaturely voices circumventing us and therefore its participation in the glory of God? In light of Jesus Christ, we may not only confess the revelation of the divine essence in its glory, but in addition that there is a sinner reconciled to and in him and also the loosening of dumb tongues, and therefore an answer awakened and elicited to his glory by God himself, and as awakened and elicited by him has a share in his glory.[44]

The answer is of course Jesus Christ: "What rules, sustains, and moves this creaturely work, what gives to it start and path and goal, is the creator and lord of this new creature, which is new man living in it, Jesus Christ himself."[45] God is not glorified by human beings alone but by human beings who co-exist with God. Human beings are free to glorify, to worship God because and only because God has freed humanity to do so. God makes his glory known and only thus are human beings able to reflect that glory back and glorify God. Such reflection is rooted in God's self-revelation, in his giving of knowledge of himself to humanity.[46]

Our response to the revelation of God's glory, to God's self-giving of knowledge of himself to us, is gratitude and thanksgiving. Our ability to glorify God is ultimately a gift of the Holy Spirit who bestows upon us this ability. "In this way," writes Barth, we have "a part in [Jesus Christ's] glory and therefore in the glory of God."[47] According to Barth, human beings are,

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43 *CD* II/1, 669; *KD* II/1, 755. This is unfortunately rendered as an indicative rather than an interrogative in the English translation.

44 *CD* II/1, 668; *KD* II/1, 753.

45 *CD* II/1, 669; *KD* II/1, 755.

46 The connection between the glory of God and Barth's well-known emphasis on revelation should be more than clear by this point. Wolf Krötke's following of Luther, along with the influence of Barth, in rendering of δόξα as *Klarheit*, clarity, and focusing on God's revelation in Jesus Christ is especially insightful in this regard. See Wolf Krötke, "Gottes Klarheit," in *Der Wahrheit Gottes verphlichtet* (Berlin: Wichern-Verlag, 1993).

47 *CD* II/1, 670; *KD* II/1, 755.

by the work of the Spirit, grateful in a way analogous to the way that God is his eternity and glory. The purpose of the creature, the determination of its very (new) being, is to glorify God.

Barth concludes his treatment of divine glory "by considering what it means that the creature is permitted to thank and serve the glory of God, honoring and praising God."[48] This treatment of "permission" contains the groundwork for the covenant relationship between God and humanity in all three forms of eternity's temporality. The capacity for worship is a divine permission granted human beings and thus "all sense of the power and truth" of the "ability, necessity, and obligation" to glorify God must be considered only secondarily to permission. In their merely created state, human beings are not possessed of even the ability to worship God, and thus the obligation to worship is out of the question, either pre- or post-Fall. The capacity for worship belongs to God alone. Human beings can praise and worship God only because God permits us to do so. We are "awakened, called, and enabled" to glorify God and thus participate in his being only because of God's permission:

> that therein the creature flows from the glory of God, that God himself adopts the creature, that he not only creates, calls upon, and governs it, but in all he loves it, seeks it out so as not to be God without it but with it, and even therewith to draw it to himself, so that it for its sake can now only be a creature with him and not without him. God bestows himself to his creature. This is his glory revealed in Jesus Christ and this is the sum of the entire doctrine of God. And the creature to whom God bestows himself may praise him. What can ability, obligation, and necessity mean where everything depends on the divine bestowal of love and therefore everything rests in this permission.[49]

This divine bestowal is liberation from the limitations of a merely creaturely existence and "from this liberation wells the praise of God . . . in this liberation is the criterion of its genuineness and purity. From this liberation it receives its forms, the words and deeds in which it occurs."[50] This liberation is not only the forgiveness of sins or reconciliation from our fallen estrangement. It is our liberation from the limitations of a merely human existence to a life with God. Creation, reconciliation, and redemp-

48 *CD* II/1, 670; *KD* II/1, 756.

49 *CD* II/1, 671; *KD* II/1, 757.

50 *CD* II/1, 672; *KD* II/1, 758.

tion are not steps along the way in humanity's salvation. Our redemption is not a return to some pre-Fall relationship with God. Barth's soteriology is not that of the classical *exitus-reditus* model. Instead, salvation is new creation. It does not belong to the nature of human beings to have the capacity to worship God. Those human beings who lived prior to the Fall also stood in need of liberation from the limits of a merely human existence. All human beings stand in need of the divine bestowal of permission to worship God. Humanity is truly capable of worshiping God only because God has bestowed upon us the capacity to do so, and this divine bestowal is the new form of human existence. This new existence is the future of creation, freedom to glorify God as his covenant partner.

God is under no obligation to grant us permission to worship. God's permission is purely the grace of God rooted in the eternal relationship between the Father and Son in the Spirit. God's gift of permission is liberation, and it

> consists in the fact that God co-exists with [the creature] in such a way that in its distinction as a creature, and in a manner of speaking in addition to this distinction it receives a new distinction in which it may praise God and for that reason can, should, will, and so also must.[51]

Because the permission for worship is rooted in God's co-existence with human beings, it is ultimately God's self-glorification. Worship belongs to God alone, and it is in only in co-existence that it becomes a capacity extended to human beings. Barth defines co-existence as "the overflow of divine existence into correspondence with the creature" and "the superabundance of the divine being in which fellowship between him and our created being is established." However, Barth adds, "Our existence cannot be itself divine existence; it can though be creaturely witness to divine existence."[52] This then is the determination of our co-existence with God: our purpose is to bear witness to God's glory. The creature is "the image of God." Barth affirmed this purpose in the bombed-out shell of the university of Bonn in response to the question of why God created the world:

> I know of nothing other than to say: as the theatre of his glory. This is the meaning that God is glorified. Δόξα, *gloria*, all mean simply, to be

51 *CD* II/1, 672; *KD* II/1, 758.

52 *CD* II/1, 673; *KD* II/1, 759.

> revealed. God wants to be visible in the world and in so far is creation a meaningful act of God. 'See, it was very good.'[53]

Having been given the capacity to glorify God, human beings are called to follow God: "The meaning and purpose of the glorification of God cannot be fulfilled in any arbitrary or other form of existence, speech, or action."[54] True worship on the part of human beings takes the form of correspondence to God. Correspondence is obedience to God, to his commands, and to his example. Ultimately, the example that we are to follow is the glorification of God. God creates a theater for his own glory. He goes out from himself in order that he be glorified. God's covenant with humanity is an act undertaken for his self-glorification. In that we are brought into relationship with God, we are called to participate in the divine activity of self-glorification. Barth states plainly,

> The glorification of God consists simply in the life-obedience of the creature that knows God. It has no other alternative but to thank and praise God. . . . In this sense the way and the theater of the glorification of God is no more and no less than the totality of the existence of the creature who knows God and offers his life-obedience.[55]

Near the beginning of his treatment of glory Barth writes, "The revelation of God's glory is always future, as its truth and power and activity are already present."[56] He returns to this theme at the end of the section on glory. Here, Barth takes up the glorification of God on the part of the creature in the post-temporal aspect of eternity. "The Church," says Barth,

> remembers the total thanksgiving and service that someday it will offer in fullness and in the life of its members and which God in the highest is already offered now by his angels. The Church takes heart in this future, post-temporal and still already supra-temporal eternal worship. It yearns after it, to participate in its perfection. It conforms itself to its perfection.[57]

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53 Karl Barth, *Dogmatik im Grundriß* (Zollikon-Zürich: Evangelischer Verlag A. G., 1947), 66–67.

54 *CD* II/1, 674; *KD* II/1, 760.

55 *CD* II/1, 674–75; *KD* II/1, 760–61.

56 *CD* II/1, 642; *KD* II/1, 724.

57 *CD* II/1, 675; *KD* II/1, 761.

The Church, along with the entirety of creation, waits in time for its complete perfection, i.e., for its redemption. We cannot yet see the totality of the glory of God, and we cannot yet see our own perfection. This does not indicate that we do not yet perceive the glory of God, that we are somehow excluded from knowing him. But it does mean that the form in which the Church currently exists "is another and special form, that as temporal it is a provisional form in contrast to the perfect form which we may here and now await, and to which the Church may approach."[58]

Human worship of God this side of the eschaton is provisional and temporary to the degree that the current worship of the Church belongs to a "special sphere." The Church itself belongs to this special sphere along with "*proclamation, faith, confession, theology, prayer.*"[59] These temporal forms of worship are currently the only ways that we can worship God. Barth wants to ensure that we do not exclude other forms that worship may take either temporally (though he gives no examples) or post-temporally. This special provisional sphere writes Barth, "in its particularity involves and attests only a particular aspect of the whole." But, he is quick to add, "It most certainly involves and attests and indeed virtually is the whole."[60] As the Church, our acts of worship truly do glorify God and participate in his act of self-glorification. The limit—the provision that is placed on them—is that we do not see the whole. God's full glory is still hidden from us. The form of life given to us in this sphere is that of obedience, and the primary act of that obedience is following after God and corresponding to him. As Barth wrote in his unfinished commentary on the *Heidelberg Catechism*, "That and only that human act which is obedient to God's commandment is that which keeps holy the right of God established in Jesus Christ in such a way that it has its limits in the incomparability and inaccessibility of God, but also in God's glory and worthiness of worship (*anbetungswürdigkeit*)."[61]

Nevertheless, the time will come when God is no longer hidden from us; when he will no longer be revealed in his veiledness. Then we will see

58 *CD* II/1, 675; *KD* II/1, 762.

59 *CD* II/1, 676; *KD* II/1, 762.

60 *CD* II/1, 676; *KD* II/1, 762.

61 Karl Barth, *Die christliche Lehre nach dem Heidelberger Katechismus* (Zollikon-Zürich: Evangelischer Verlag A. G., 1948), 106.

him in his glory. Barth repeatedly states that we are not excluded from the glory of God in the here and now. Still, it is only when the Church reaches its perfection, when it is no longer a tarnished mirror but a pure reflective surface, that we will be able to see God in his full glory. As John writes, "Beloved, we are God's children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that when he appears we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he is" (1 John 3:2). Only God is capable of making his creation so.

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Creatio Continua Ex Electione: A Post-Barthian Revision of the Doctrine of *Creatio Ex Nihilo*

DAVID W. CONGDON

The case against the classical doctrine of *creatio ex nihilo* continues to mount as arguments arise from all angles—historical, exegetical, and theological. Many of these critiques are aimed at the Hellenistic framework within which the Christian doctrine originally took shape. Others examine the ambiguities latent within the biblical texts themselves. In this paper I will identify three theological problems with the doctrine in conversation with three theologians. The first problem is the fact that the doctrine of "creation out of nothing" posits no material relationship between creation and redemption. Here I will engage the work of Catherine Keller, who attacks *creatio ex nihilo* but ends up perpetuating this same bifurcation between origin and *telos* in her conception of *creatio ex profundis*. The second problem is that "creation out of nothing" indicates no essential connection between the divine will to create and the divine being as creator. In this context I briefly take up the work of Jürgen Moltmann and assess his understanding of divine creation as a *creatio ex amore*. The third and final problem is the separation between creation and providence, between original creation and continuing creation. Here I briefly treat Schleiermacher's account of creation in his *Glaubenslehre*. I conclude by using a modified version of Barth's doctrine of election as the lens through which I reconcile these various strands in modern theology. I argue for what I call a *creatio continua ex electione*—a continuous creation out of divine election. In the end, I hope to show that this position addresses these three problems

while still upholding the necessary insights of the traditional doctrine of "creation out of nothing."

1. THE PROBLEM OF CREATION AND REDEMPTION: CATHERINE KELLER

Among recent critiques of the traditional doctrine of creation, Catherine Keller's *Face of the Deep: A Theology of Becoming* stands out as the best representative of a popular alternative.[1] In place of *creatio ex nihilo*, she proposes a *creatio ex profundis*, a "creation out of the watery depths," which is her version of a process panentheistic theology of creation. She calls this a "tehomic panentheism,"[2] referring to the *tehom*, or the "deep," of Genesis 1:2—what she views as the "primal chaos" of creative possibility. What makes her view unique is her sophisticated biblical exegesis, her appropriation of feminist and postmodern philosophy, and her engagement with the church fathers, Augustine, and Barth. My brief discussion of her position will, however, focus very specifically on the fact that her position fails to overcome—and, in fact, extends and embraces—a problem with the traditional *creatio ex nihilo*, namely, the lack of a material connection between creation and redemption.

As the subtitle of the book indicates, Keller stands in the tradition of Alfred Whitehead by positing creation as an ongoing process of "becoming" on the part of both God and the world. Not surprisingly, she rejects classical concepts like omnipotence and transcendence, because these lead to the "dominology" of masculine power rooted in classical ontotheology. Her *creatio ex profundis* is instead "a *creatio cooperationis*."[3] God and the cosmos realize their ontic possibilities through a relationship of creative interdependence. She quotes a favorite line of hers from Whitehead: "It is as true to say that God creates the world, as that the world creates God."[4] Not surprisingly, Keller's theology leads her to rethink christology. Since

1 Catherine Keller, *Face of the Deep: A Theology of Becoming* (New York: Routledge, 2003).

2 Keller, *Face of the Deep*, 218.

3 Keller, *Face of the Deep*, 117.

4 Keller, *Face of the Deep*, 181.

God becomes God through the creative processes of the cosmos, the incarnation is no longer a singular event but is rather the totality of this divine becoming. Hence, according to Keller, "Creation is always incarnation—and would have been so without the birth of the Nazarene."[5] Her stated goal is to liberate us from all the binary oppositions that she deems to be oppressive or "dominological"—oppositions between creator and creature, between creation and incarnation.

Yet in liberating us from one kind of binary opposition, Keller ends up creating her own between the god of the philosophers—which she associates with any theologian who endorses *creatio ex nihilo* no matter how inappropriate (e.g., Karl Barth)—and the god of process theology. The irony of this bifurcation is that while her intention is to dispense with traditional metaphysical theology, she winds up promoting a deity whose attributes are metaphysically projected from the creature. The god of process theology is the deity already deconstructed by Feuerbach. Even more ironically, her *creatio ex profundis* reproduces one of the key problems with the traditional concept of *creatio ex nihilo*, in that neither the god of the philosophers nor the god of process theology is capable of accomplishing the one task that is absolutely essential for any creator to be able to achieve according to the Christian faith: namely, redemption. The god of the philosophers is too abstract by being pure actuality. The god of process theology is too abstract by being pure potentiality. Neither god can do anything new; neither can liberate. Keller has liberated God from dominology only by making God incapable of liberating us.[6]

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5 Keller, *Face of the Deep*, 226.

6 Process theology is also excessively bourgeois. The belief that a person should be able to realize redemption out of their own resources is only possible for those who have such resources at their disposal. Process theology is incomprehensible to the person seeking liberation from oppression and suffering. The attempt by process theologians to answer the theodicy question—however well-intentioned—does not succeed, because it is not an answer but an evasion. While traditionalists are rightly called to answer how an all-powerful God is not guilty for causing evil and suffering, it does no good to simply make God impotent. This is theologically and pastorally disastrous, because it means that whatever hope we may have had in an eschatologically new creation will have to be realized by us. When we are burdened with the task of self-liberation, any potential for eschatological *shalom* is replaced with a stoic acceptance of "reality," a sense of helpless anxiety. The consequence of a hyper-"salvation by works" is simply greater oppression. Keller's theology is, in the end, the complete opposite of a "theology of hope" because it is a "theology of glory" rather than a "theology of the cross."

Whereas *creatio ex nihilo* is neutral regarding the relation between creation and consummation, Keller's *creatio ex profundis* is opposed to any such relation; her position severs the connection between creation and reconciliation. The problem becomes acute when Keller rejects the concept of grace altogether. She says that, in Barth's theology, "the dogma of creation as a relationship of 'grace,' i.e. unilateral dependency, rests upon the identification of God as absolute Owner and Origin."[7] She then goes on to assert that "the position of grace" is inherently a form of sexist "dominology," because it identifies the recipient of grace as subordinate to the giver of grace.[8] For Keller, grace is actually offensive, in that it presumes one is in need of grace. For her theology of becoming, however, both creator and cosmos are in need of each other; there is no sin, no oppression, no estrangement—and therefore also no salvation. Not surprisingly, she laments the fact that liberation theologians gravitate to the doctrine of *creatio ex nihilo*. For example, after praising Moltmann's liberating theology of hope, she criticizes the fact that he "trades his hope upon the transcendent power of the Creator, who *guarantees* the new creation—as *novo creatio ex nihilo*."[9] Yet while this relationship between liberator and liberated is indeed one of grace, it is of course not a dominological relationship but precisely the opposite. The event of liberating grace is the very deconstruction of dominology, in that God liberates people *out of* relations of domination: bondage to Pharaoh in the story of Exodus and bondage to sin and death in the story of Christ. The same unilateral guarantee of the new creation that Keller finds so problematic, liberation theologians rightly identify as the heart of the Christian faith. Without this guarantee, without a liberating God of grace who unilaterally interrupts systems of oppression, there is no actual hope that God will one day rectify the unjust social orders currently enslaving humanity.

In the end, Keller is helpful in that she identifies by way of sheer exaggeration a problem latent within the traditional doctrine of *creatio ex nihilo*. The classical formulation is an expression of divine omnipotence in the abstract, dissociated from any teleological orientation. It presents

7 Keller, *Face of the Deep*, 89.

8 Keller, *Face of the Deep*, 95.

9 Keller, *Face of the Deep*, 20.

creation as an act of raw power without connection to christology, soteriology, and eschatology. Keller is thus right to criticize it, though her alternative fares no better. If we are going to speak of a "creation out of the depths," as Keller does, then it must be the depths of God's reconciling and redeeming love. For this, we must turn now to Moltmann.

2. THE PROBLEM OF BEING AND WILL: JÜRGEN MOLTMANN

In sharp contrast to Keller, Jürgen Moltmann begins his theology of creation by acknowledging the relation of creation to reconciliation: "a Christian doctrine of creation is a view of the world in the light of Jesus the Messiah."[10] Creation exists for the sake of the consummation of creation in the eschatological sabbath.[11] This much is basic to Moltmann's theology due to its eschatological orientation. Within his understanding of creation, however, is an important debate regarding whether creation proceeds from the divine will or the divine being. This is the second problem that *creatio ex nihilo*, in its standard form, fails to adequately address.

Moltmann's account of this problem begins by differentiating between creation as decree and creation as emanation. The former, which he associates with the Reformed tradition, understands God's activity in terms of a divine decree or determination to do something. In the case of creation, God "determines that he will be the world's Creator,"[12] and this determination is an act of divine freedom rather than necessity; it is an act of free will that does not have an ontological basis in the divine essence. Moltmann identifies Barth as the key modern figure in this tradition. Opposed

10 Jürgen Moltmann, *God in Creation*, trans. Margaret Kohl (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1993), 4–5.

11 Cf. Moltmann, *God in Creation*, 276–77: "The goal and completion of every Jewish and every Christian doctrine of creation must be the doctrine of the sabbath . . . The sabbath opens creation for its true future. . . . If we look at the biblical traditions that have to do with the belief in creation, we discover that the sabbath is not a day of rest following six working days. On the contrary: the whole work of creation was performed *for the sake of the sabbath*." It's worth noting that Moltmann offers a tidy rejection of process theology in his book, specifically criticizing Whitehead's rejection of *creatio ex nihilo*: "God and nature are fused into a unified world process, so that the theology of nature becomes a divinization of nature. . . . But this means that process theology of this kind has no doctrine of creation. It is conversant only with a doctrine about the preservation and ordering of the world" (Moltmann, *God in Creation*, 78–79).

12 Moltmann, *God in Creation*, 79–80.

to this is the idea of creation out of the divine being, i.e., creation as creative emanation. Basic to the doctrine of emanation is the view that God "is essentially creative" and thus creation "is not an event *within* the life of God. It is 'identical' with his life. Creation is neither chance nor necessity. It is God's 'destiny.'"[13] Creation in this view is not an act of will secondary to God's being; rather, "the divine life is creative by reason of its eternal nature."[14] Here Moltmann identifies Paul Tillich as the key modern figure. The problem with a Barthian creation from divine will is that it tends to speculate about what God "might have done," and thus separates God's being or nature from God's act or will.[15] The problem with a Tillichian creation from divine life is that "it becomes difficult to distinguish between God's creatures and God's eternal creation of himself."[16]

Moltmann's project is an attempt to move beyond these two options. Whereas creation from the divine will locates creation in the economic Trinity, creation from the divine being locates creation in the immanent Trinity. Moltmann, continuing his trinitarian project in *The Trinity and the Kingdom*, questions the traditional separation between the immanent and economic. Such a split intends to protect divine freedom, but as Moltmann rightly states, "God is not entirely free when he can do and leave undone what he likes; he is entirely free when he is entirely himself."[17] Hence, he argues that "it is important to maintain the identity of the divine life and the divine creative activity."[18] Instead of a creation from decision *versus* a creation from being, Moltmann suggests that we understand God's resolve to create as an "essential resolve" and God's creative being as the

13 Moltmann, *God in Creation*, 83.

14 Moltmann, *God in Creation*, 83.

15 Moltmann, *God in Creation*, 82. Moltmann's claim depends upon the view that Barth maintains an abstract freedom of God in his doctrine of creation: God could have acted otherwise. God's being and God's act are not mutually determinative. While Barth certainly offers statements that tend in this direction, he is by no means consistent in this view and such statements occur primarily in his earlier writings. Barth's mature doctrine of election in *Church Dogmatics* II/2 finally precludes any separation between essence and will, and we see the fruit of this in his doctrine of creation (*CD* III) and doctrine of reconciliation (*CD* IV). Though it is not my concern in this paper, here I will simply point out that Moltmann greatly oversimplifies Barth's theology by reducing him to one side of this binary opposition.

16 Moltmann, *God in Creation*, 84.

17 Moltmann, *God in Creation*, 82–83.

18 Moltmann, *God in Creation*, 84.

"resolved essence" of God.[19] God's essence and existence, being and will, are identical, and both are creative. God's being simply *is* the decision to be the creator, reconciler, and redeemer.

Moltmann unites being and will in his definition of God as love: "The unity of will and nature in God can be appropriately grasped through the concept of love. God loves the world with the very same love which he eternally *is*."[20] If God is by nature love, and this love is always intrinsically oriented to the creaturely other, then there is no split in content between God's immanent life and economic activity. Who God is and what God does are ontologically identical. Borrowing from the theology of Catherine LaCugna, we can therefore define this doctrine of creation as a *creatio ex amore*—a creation out of love:

> To be sure, the reason for creation does not lie in the creature, or in some claim the creature has on God. It would make no sense to say that God 'needs' the world in order to be God, if this sets up the creature as a higher or more ultimate principle than God; the creature would have to preexist God so that God could be constituted as God in relation to the creature. This is absurd, since God and the creature simply would have switched places. The reason for creation lies entirely in the unfathomable mystery of God, who is self-originating *and* self-communicating love. While the world is the gracious result of divine freedom, God's freedom means *necessarily* being who and what God is. From this standpoint the world is not created *ex nihilo* but *ex amore, ex condilectione*, that is, out of divine love.[21]

For both Moltmann and LaCugna, the concept of love encompasses both the immanent and economic life of God, and thus love unites both nature and will. Creation is not a secondary act, but flows instead from the primary definition of God: *deus est caritas*.[22]

While there is much to commend here, the position of *creatio ex amore* falls short in that both Moltmann and LaCugna, along with almost everyone in the social trinitarian camp, define the being of God via an analogical

19 Moltmann, *God in Creation*, 85.

20 Moltmann, *God in Creation*, 85.

21 Catherine Mowry LaCugna, *God for Us: The Trinity and Christian Life* (San Francisco: HarperCollins, 1991), 355. Cf. Elizabeth T. Groppe, "Creation *Ex Nihilo* and *Ex Amore*: Ontological Freedom in the Theologies of John Zizioulas and Catherine Mowry LaCugna," *Modern Theology* 21, no.3 (2005): 469–73.

22 Moltmann, *God in Creation*, 86.

projection of human being upon the divine, which is then used to validate a particular form of human social relations. This movement from human to divine to human again is made possible through the (mis)use of the word "person." Human persons are defined as acting subjects with an independent will; hence, the trinitarian "persons" are defined as three acting subjects with three individual wills who are brought into unity through a mysterious perichoretic indwelling. The social trinitarian argument then seeks to authorize an egalitarian politics by appealing to the mutual indwelling of the divine persons as the archetypal form of personhood.[23] The problem with social trinitarianism is that it is simply a modern version of the ancient *via eminentiae* mode of metaphysical thinking about God; it is a type of projectionism that again falls under the critique of Feuerbach. There is no intrinsic connection in Moltmann's account between the love of God and the person of Jesus Christ as the one who actually defines divine love.

Moltmann's alternative understanding of creation as *creatio ex amore* goes a long way toward addressing the problems with *creatio ex nihilo*. The unity of creation and redemption on the one hand, and the unity of God's being and will on the other, are both incorporated into his account of "creation out of love." The aporia in his account is located in the fact that God's love is not defined on the basis of God's particular act of revelation. Love is a general anthropological phenomenon, not a concrete divine event in the singular reality of Jesus Christ. As a result, it remains fatally abstract. Moltmann talks about love as the ground of creation, without defining this love christologically.

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23 See Kathryn Tanner, "Kingdom Come: The Trinity and Politics," *Princeton Seminary Bulletin* 28, no. 2 (2007): 129–45. Tanner's critique of social trinitarianism is consummate. Among other things, she states: "No matter how close the similarities between human and divine persons, differences always remain. God is not us, and this sets up the major problem for theologies that want to base conclusions about human relationships on the Trinity. . . . So, for example, it seems bound up with their essential finitude that human persons can only metaphorically be in one another, if that means having overlapping subjectivities in the way the persons of the Trinity do. Because all the other members of the Trinity are in that person, when one person of the Trinity acts the others are necessarily acting, too. Clearly this does not hold for human persons: I may enter empathetically into the one I love, but that does not mean I act when my beloved does" (136–38). For a revised and expanded version of this essay, see Kathryn Tanner, *Christ the Key* (New York: Cambridge, 2010), 207–46.

3. THE PROBLEM OF CREATION AND PRESERVATION: SCHLEIERMACHER

The third problem with *creatio ex nihilo* is the relation between creation and preservation. The doctrine of "creation out of nothing" posits a disjunction between these two concepts: between a once-for-all act and the ongoing activity of sustaining the world. Like the previous two dichotomies, this one also needs to be rethought. The work of Friedrich Schleiermacher hints at a way forward.

In his *Glaubenslehre*, Schleiermacher critically examines the received wisdom that distinguishes between *creatio originalis* and *creatio continua*. The former is defined as the originating act of bringing the cosmos into existence, while the latter is God's providential preservation of this creation throughout history. Schleiermacher questions the logic behind this distinction: on the one hand, since the progressive creation of what presently exists reveals "the active continuance of formative forces," there is nothing which cannot "be brought under the concept of Preservation"; on the other hand, since preservation "is equivalent to that alternation of changes and movements in which their being perdures," the entire process of preservation in fact "falls under the conception of creation."[24] Depending on which perspective you take, creation or preservation becomes superfluous.

Schleiermacher criticizes the tradition for giving the impression that God alternates between activity and rest, as if God were active at some moments but not at others—a view deriving from an overly literal reading of the creation account in Genesis 1. This movement between activity and passivity runs counter to his theology, which begins with the absolute dependence of all things upon God. If God is not eternally *actus purus*, then our dependence upon God is not absolute, and our entire relation with God is threatened. Not surprisingly, Schleiermacher endorses the

24 Friedrich Schleiermacher, *The Christian Faith*, ed. H. R. Mackintosh and J. S. Stewart (New York: T & T Clark, 1999), §38, 146–47.

doctrine of *creatio ex nihilo,* because the existence of any material independent of God's creative activity "would destroy the feeling of absolute dependence."[25] Of course, one need not accept this starting-point to still find the distinction between *creatio originalis* and *creatio continua* arbitrary and unnecessary.

Schleiermacher himself provides us with a more theologically sound reason to unify creation and preservation in his very brief but suggestive comments on whether creation is a temporal or eternal activity. He finds Origen lacking because God is brought into the realm of temporal change. But he also finds Augustine problematic when the latter posits an act of divine will to explain the transition—only this time the move is not from inactivity to activity but from willing to doing. For Schleiermacher, this is no solution; the transition from one to the other, however these are conceived, remains unexplained on the basis of God's revelation, viz., christology. Against the traditional attempt to identify a point of transition from the *ad intra* to the *ad extra* in the life of God—an attempt that is always hopelessly speculative in nature—Schleiermacher argues that the *ad intra* can only be the eternal actualization of what occurs in the economy. According to John 1, if the eternal Logos created the cosmos, then "the tracing of the Word through which God created the world . . . back to the Word which was with God from eternity, can never be made clearly intelligible if there is not an eternal creation through the eternal Word."[26] Schleiermacher's logic is that if the Word created the world, and if this creative Word is the same Word from all eternity, then creation is also essentially eternal.

With this christological argument, we have a position that can bring together original creation and continuing creation. According to Schleiermacher, there is no change in God from non-creative to creative. The decision to create is not one decision among others that God chose to actualize after a prior deliberation. There is no sense in speaking about how God might not have created. Thinking along such lines "assume[s] an antithesis between freedom and necessity" and places God "within the realm

25 Schleiermacher, *The Christian Faith*, §41, 153.

26 Schleiermacher, *The Christian Faith*, §41, 156.

of contradictions."[27] That is, such speculation makes God only relatively rather than absolutely transcendent. According to Schleiermacher, what God does now is true of God eternally, since God is "pure act." Consequently, the line of demarcation between creation and preservation becomes indeterminate. Rather than dispense with one or the other, we can make them eternally coterminous. Schleiermacher's understanding of creation thus addresses the previous two problems with *creatio ex nihilo*: (1) creation is an eternal activity that has the appearance of the mediator included within it as its *telos*, and (2) the being of God is eternally creative, so that creation is the proper expression of God's very essence. As significant as this account of creation is, Schleiermacher's position, like Moltmann's, remains too abstract. The creative activity of God is posited on the basis of a general anthropological given, viz., the feeling of absolute dependence. God's creative activity, while intrinsically related to redemption, is not determined by the concrete revelatory event in which that redemption occurs. What we need is an account of creation in which redemption is not simply the necessary end, but is also creation's eternal ground and origin. The resources for such a position are found in Karl Barth.

4. CONCLUSION: *CREATIO CONTINUA EX ELECTIONE*

Instead of *creatio ex nihilo*, the position for which I am arguing may be called *creatio continua ex electione*, a "continuous creation out of election." This position takes its bearings from a modified version of Barth's doctrine of election, the specifics of which can only be hinted at here. Without rehearsing the details of Barth's doctrine, it will suffice to note that, in the second volume of his *Church Dogmatics*,[28] Barth identifies Jesus Christ as both the subject and object of election. The consequences of this move are vast and hotly debated. All sides in these debates agree on the following four basic points: (1) God's election is the first of all God's works *ad extra*, (2) election is God's self-determination to be God-for-us,

27 Schleiermacher, *The Christian Faith*, §41, 156.

28 Karl Barth, *Die kirchliche Dogmatik*, 4 vols. in 13 parts (Zollikon-Zürich: Evangelischer Verlag A. G., 1932–1970); hereafter cited as *KD*. ET Karl Barth, *Church Dogmatics*, ed. G. W. Bromiley and T. F. Torrance, 4 vols. in 13 parts (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1956–1975); hereafter cited as *CD*.

(3) all other acts of God flow from the decision of election as their unifying origin and end, and (4) election concerns God's reconciliation of the world within the covenant of grace.

The result of the first point is that Barth sides with supralapsarianism over infralapsarianism where the orders of the divine decrees are concerned. While he drastically reworks this entire Reformed debate, he nevertheless stands with the supralapsarians in making the decree of election prior to and determinative for the decree of creation. The major change he makes is in identifying Jesus Christ, the incarnate one, as the subject of this decree in addition to its object. The second point, in connection with the first, is the source of the current so-called "Grace and Being" controversy,[29] but at the very least both sides agree that the only God we actually encounter is the God who is eternally *pro nobis*, the God who has elected to be with us and for us in Jesus Christ. What that might mean for the logical relation between triunity and election is irrelevant to the concerns of this paper. The third point affirms that if election is definitive for who God is, then all the other divine works are grounded in this prior and determinative decision of election. Most significantly for my thesis here, this means that the covenant of grace is the "internal basis" of creation, while creation is the "external basis" of the covenant.[30] The position I sketch below is a reworking of this dialectical relation between covenant and creation. Finally, the fourth point is simply descriptive of what election means in Barth's theology, viz., that it is the divine decision which constitutes the Christ-event as the reconciliation of all things to God (cf. 2 Cor 5:19).

What follows is my brief and provisional attempt to think through the relation between election, christology, and creation *after* and *beyond* Barth. My primary concern is to elaborate a doctrine of creation that addresses the above problems, but, because this involves correlating creation and election, I will also offer a revised doctrine of election. In doing so, I self-consciously depart from Barth, though a full explanation for why this is so will have to wait for a future occasion. Briefly, the issue is that Barth

29 So called because the origin of the debate was the essay by Bruce L. McCormack, "Grace and Being: The Role of God's Gracious Election in Karl Barth's Theological Ontology," in *The Cambridge Companion to Karl Barth*, ed. John Webster (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 92–110.

30 See *CD* III/1, §41.

makes election to be primarily protological in character. It is a one-time act in pre-temporal eternity that establishes the basis for the covenant of grace. In this sense, it has an intriguing parallel to the traditional conception of creation as a one-time act—depending on whom you ask, an act in time or eternity—that establishes the basis for God's ongoing work of providence. It is tempting, and all too easy based on what Barth says, to criticize his position for being just as abstract as the *decretum absolutum* that he attacks. He certainly opens himself to such criticism when he contrasts "the eternal covenant concerning humanity that God made with himself in his pre-temporal eternity" with "the covenant of grace between God and humanity whose establishment and execution in time were decided by that election."[31] One quite naturally draws the conclusion from such passages that election is a finished act in the eternal past which only becomes manifest in time through the history of Jesus Christ. Even if one historicizes election and identifies it with the life history of Jesus Christ, it remains, on this reading, a past event that happened once and now only needs to be acknowledged.

As prominent as such themes are in Barth's theology, to his great credit, he complicates this interpretation in a small-print section near the end of §33.[32] In this section, Barth criticizes the "traditional teaching," derived by way of contrast with mutable human decrees, that "saw in predestination an isolated and given enactment [*eine abgeschlossen vorliegende Verfügung*]" which eternally "entangled and bound" God in relation to time.[33] According to this view, "God *willed once* in the pre-temporal eternity when the decree was conceived and established," and therefore "the *living quality* of this action is *perfectum*, eternal *past*."[34] God elected at one time, but this electing decision "now *no longer* takes place."[35] What God does in the present is merely an "echo" (*Nachklang*) of the past decree of God. As a result, such a God is not living but dead. Barth even compares this view

31 *CD* II/2, 104; *KD* II/2, 111–12. Translation revised. Future revisions will be marked as "rev."

32 *CD* II/2, 181-84; *KD* II/2, 198–202.

33 *CD* II/2, 181 (rev); *KD* II/2, 198.

34 *CD* II/2, 181; *KD* II/2, 199. My translation with original italics restored. All future italics are restored from the original German.

35 *CD* II/2, 181; *KD* II/2, 199. My translation.

of predestination with deism, because of the sharp and static separation between the eternal being of God and temporal, worldly existence.[36]

Against the deistic model of election that he finds in Protestant orthodoxy, Barth claims that "God's decree is not lifeless, but rather infinitely more alive than any human decree."[37] What he means by this, though, requires some careful elucidation. On the one hand, he explicitly and rightly stresses that the life of God, defined by God's electing decision, "has the character not only of an unparalleled 'perfect' but also of an unparalleled '*present*' and '*future*.'"[38] On the other hand, Barth is very clear that the only reason the decision of election is present and future is because it is completed and finished in the past. That is to say, the decision itself is not present and future, but rather only its significance. Barth uses strong language to convey this point. He says that God's eternal decision "has the full weight of the eternal 'perfect,'" that it is "completed and isolated" (*vollbracht und abgeschlossen*), that it "precedes all creaturely life," and finally that it "stands harder than steel and granite before and above all things and all events."[39] In all these statements, Barth stands in basic continuity with the tradition of the *decretum absolutum*. But lest we misunderstand him, Barth explains that this decision did not happen only "back before time" (*vor der Zeit zurück*) as the tradition had it, but rather it is simultaneously "pre-temporal" (*vorzeitlich*), "supra-temporal" (*überzeitlich*), and "post-temporal" (*nachzeitlich*) in its eternal actuality.[40] Nevertheless, election is not an ongoing and ever-present decision here and now. On the contrary, even though it is completed and finished in the eternal past, because God is present and future as the predestinating Lord over creation, the decision of election remains present and future in its living significance for us. Barth thus states, over against the *decretum absolutum*, that "God is never a mere echo; he is and remains and always will be an independent tone and sound."[41]

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36 Cf. *CD* II/2, 182; *KD* II/2, 200.

37 *CD* II/2, 183 (rev); *KD* II/2, 201.

38 *CD* II/2, 183; *KD* II/2, 201.

39 *CD* II/2, 183 (rev); *KD* II/2, 201.

40 *CD* II/2, 183 (rev); *KD* II/2, 201.

41 *CD* II/2, 183 (rev); *KD* II/2, 201.

Barth's position has some distinct positives and negatives that stand in some tension. On the positive side, Barth clearly wants to understand the decision of election as an ongoing divine event. He says that because it is a "concrete decree," election "never ceases to be *event*."[42] This event of election occurs as "history, encounter, and decision," and for that reason it is an "act of divine life in the Spirit" (*Akt göttlichen Geisteslebens*).[43] This peculiar phrase is unique to this section of the *Dogmatics*. It occurs only three times, and all of them in the two paragraphs of the large-print passage directly following Barth's rejection of the deistic character of the traditional doctrine of predestination.[44] Barth seems to indicate by this divine life-in-the-Spirit that election is concretely and actively related to the particularities of historical existence. It is not an abstract decision in eternity over against time; rather, it is a living decision in the Spirit of Jesus Christ. This is the profound and creative aspect of Barth's doctrine that I wish to appropriate. The negative aspect of Barth's understanding of election is due to the fact that he does not draw out the provocative implications of this notion for the rest of his theology. The possibilities latent within the idea of election as an "act of divine life in the Spirit" are mostly unrealized. He draws upon it in opposition to deism, but then drops it when it no longer suits his polemical purposes. If he had stayed more consistent with this insight, he would not have emphasized the eternally past and perfected character of election as much as he does.[45]

42 *CD* II/2, 184; *KD* II/2, 202.

43 *CD* II/2, 184; *KD* II/2, 202.

44 The three occurrences are: "Only as concrete decree, only as an act of divine life in the Spirit, is it the law which precedes all creaturely life" (*CD* II/2, 184; *KD* II/2, 202); "Since it is itself history, encounter and decision, since it is an act of divine life in the Spirit, since it is the unbroken and lasting determining and decreeing of Him who as Lord of all things has both the authority and the power for such activity, it is the presupposition of all movement of creaturely life" (ibid., rev.); "But it is an act of divine life in the Spirit, an act which affects us, an act which occurs in the very midst of time no less than in that far distant pre-temporal eternity" (*CD* II/2, 185 [rev]; *KD* II/2, 204). The translators of this volume rendered the latter two instances of "divine life in the spirit," as "in the Spirit," for no apparent reason.

45 Eberhard Jüngel, in his interpretation of Barth's doctrine of election, makes this phrase ("act of divine life in the Spirit") central to Barth's theology in a way that is creative and interesting, though perhaps a bit of a stretch considering how marginal it is to the *Church Dogmatics*. Throughout the rest of the work, Barth's use of *Geistesleben* is almost exclusively used to speak of *human* life-in-the-Spirit or "spiritual life," and it is often used pejoratively because of the Schleiermacherian connotations. A typical example is this passage from the first volume: "God reveals himself as the Spirit, not as any spirit, not as the basis of humanity's spiritual life [*des menschlichen Geisteslebens*] which we can discover and awaken, but

The claim I make here is that a more pneumatic-actualistic conception of election—understood as a divine act in the Spirit (of Christ) here and now—allows for a correspondingly actualistic conception of creation as a continuous divine act in every new moment. I do not mean to contrast a "pneumatic-actualistic" election with Barth's christocentric election in which Jesus Christ is both subject and object of the divine decree. On the contrary, I mean this pneumatological revision to occur *within* the framework set forth by Barth. I understand this in the following way: the divine life-in-the-Spirit that constitutes the living actuality of election takes place *within* the event of Jesus Christ. The awakening work of the Spirit does not simply point toward a finished and completed reality in the past; it is rather constitutive of the event itself. This is because the Jesus whose history constitutes the decision of election is the same one who also sent the Spirit into the world (cf. John 20:22). As I understand it, therefore, the *Christus praesens* is the ongoing and infinite repetition of the singularity of Jesus Christ in our midst through the Spirit's power. The Spirit does not enable a mere "recollection" of a "completed and isolated" election. Instead, the Spirit actualizes the contingent "repetition"[46] of Christ's election in both hidden and manifest forms, thus extending the originating event to embrace new concrete particularities without relying on a metaphysical "logic of assumption"[47] whereby Christ's humanity is the general *humanitas* of all human beings.

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as the Spirit of the Father and the Son . . ." (*CD* I/1, 332 [rev]; *KD* I/1, 351). The notion of a *divine* life-in-the-Spirit does not make another appearance outside of the two paragraphs in §33, as far as I can tell. Nevertheless, as an interpretation of Barth that seeks to bring him into a positive relation with Bultmann, Jüngel is right to emphasize this concept. It also shows his keen eye for easily overlooked, but deeply insightful, elements in Barth's theology. See Eberhard Jüngel, *God's Being Is in Becoming: The Trinitarian Being of God in the Theology of Karl Barth. A Paraphrase*, trans. John Webster (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2001), 91–92.

46 I use the terms "recollection" and "repetition" in the technical sense set forth by Kierkegaard. For an excellent scholarly treatment of this theme, see Niels Nymann Eriksen, *Kierkegaard's Category of Repetition: A Reconstruction*, Kierkegaard Studies: Monograph Series 5 (Berlin; New York: W. de Gruyter, 2000).

47 Cf. Edwin Chr. van Driel, "The Logic of Assumption," in *Exploring Kenotic Christology: The Self-Emptying of God*, ed. C. Stephen Evans (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), 265–90. See also Edwin Chr. van Driel, *Incarnation Anyway: Arguments for Supralapsarian Christology* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 138–42. While I accept some of van Driel's critiques of Barth on this point, I do not accept his christological proposal as the proper alternative, as compelling as some of its features may be.

In this proposal, election is "new every morning." It is always a decision-in-becoming as a divine act in the Spirit. Contrary to Barth's emphasis on protology, my focus is rather on eschatology—understood as an eschatological interruption in the present. What happens in the present and the future is *not* simply the noetic acknowledgement or recognition of what has already happened on behalf of all in Jesus Christ. Rather it is Christ himself confronting us today, proclaiming the divine "Yes" to us and to all. The act of election is thus no eternally past or perfect decision, but it repeatedly occurs as a particular, concrete event in the pentecostal totality of Christ's past, present, and future historicity. As a result, election is not a one-time act occurring in a pre-temporal eternity; it is rather an always-new decision here and now that takes place as God interrupts the world in Jesus Christ through the Spirit. Election itself is a continuous election: it is God's continuous reaffirmation of Godself as God-for-us and God's continuous reaffirmation of the creature as creature-for-God. Election is thus an ongoing event in the "eternal now" (*nunc eternum*). It has never not taken place, and therefore one cannot get behind it to find a more primordial understanding of God or the world.

The move from election to creation is straightforward. If election is God's eternal decision in Jesus Christ to be in covenant fellowship with the creaturely other, then election itself posits or establishes creation as the theodramatic stage for God's covenant of grace. Creation derives wholly from and exists wholly for God's reconciliation and redemption of humankind. As Barth writes in his *Church Dogmatics*, Jesus Christ "is with the world—a world created by him, for him, and to him—as the theater [*Schauplatz*] of God's history with humanity and of humanity's history with God."[48] And later he says that God's creation "of all the reality distinct from God took place on the basis of this purposed covenant and with a view to its execution."[49] God's decision to elect Jesus Christ is simultaneously God's decision to create. God elects, and the world is brought into existence. Election is of course logically prior to creation, but they coincide temporally. More importantly, they coincide in the person of Jesus Christ, as the Word in the beginning through whom the world

48 *CD* II/2, 94 (rev); *KD* II/2, 101.

49 *CD* III/3, 36; *KD* III/3, 41.

came into being (John 1:10)—and simultaneously as the Word of God's future that speaks to us here and now in the eschatological moment and will speak to us again. Creation, we can thus say, is an eternal act rooted in the eternal Word of God who is self-determined by the eternal decision of election. To be more specific, the definitive act of creation is the resurrection of Jesus from the dead, and this creative act repeats itself in the justifying word that declares new life to dead sinners. Creation, properly speaking, is *new creation*. We cannot isolate an old creation, or "nature," from which to draw general theological or ethical concepts. Our only epistemic access to creation is *through* election, and thus through the Spirit of God who meets us in the word that justifies sinners. Moreover, since election is a continuous christological event, so too is creation. If creation is an ever-new occurrence, then very little if any distinction remains between creation and preservation—an insight which, as John Walton has recently argued, has exegetical merit.[50] Preservation, I am arguing, is simply the continuous giving of existence to creation. Creation, like election, is "new every morning."[51]

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50 In his recent book, John Walton argues that Genesis 1 presents a "functional ontology" (as opposed to a "material ontology") in which the creative activity of God primarily concerns the establishment of functions, or the institution of purpose, within the cosmos. See John H. Walton, *The Lost World of Genesis One: Ancient Cosmology and the Origins Debate* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2009), 16–46, 119–24. According to Walton, Genesis is neutral with regard to the material origins of the cosmos, which is why he says that *creatio ex nihilo* is a misinterpretation of the text, even if it has theological warrant as a logically necessary position (43). The result of Walton's exegetical analysis is that the divine acts of creating and sustaining are brought very close together. What God creates, according to Genesis, are creaturely functions, and this act of creation involves simultaneously the preservation of these functions. Creation is "ongoing and dynamic" because God "continues to sustain the functions moment by moment" for the sake of accomplishing God's covenant purposes (121). Walton, however, still maintains a distinction between creation and preservation, because the "continuing activity is not the *same* as the activity of the six days, but it is the reason why the six days took place" (122). Walton interprets Genesis 1 as the establishment of the cosmic temple, in which the Sabbath is the fulfillment of the six days precisely because it is the event in which God descends to dwell within the temple. For this reason, the distinction between the six days and the seventh—between creation and preservation—is essential to preserve the Sabbath-oriented temple theology that forms the heart of the Genesis account. Nevertheless, "the line between [them] is dotted rather than solid, as the narrative of Genesis 1 puts God in place to perpetuate the functions after they are established in the six days" (122). For this reason, "both originating and sustaining can be seen as variations of the work of the Creator, even though they do not entirely merge together" (123). All of God's works, from creation to redemption, are acts of "bringing order to disorder," directing the cosmos toward its fulfillment in the eschatological reign of Christ.

51 In an essay on the concept of history in Christian thought, Erich Frank affirms the notion of a continuous or eternal creation on the grounds that creation is a divine act that

I have called this position *creatio continua ex electione*. I define creation as *continua* because it is not a single event back in the past but rather a moment-by-moment actualization of the world's existence, and it is *ex electione* because creation has no independent status apart from the election of grace. The *continua* means that God's relation to the world is non-competitive in character. Against deism and interventionism, both of which place God and creation over against each other as static competitive entities, *creatio continua* understands God's continuous activity of creation to be "paradoxically identical" (Bultmann) with the formative forces within nature. At the same time, the *ex electione* identifies God's relation to the world as apocalyptic in character, since creation coincides with God's eschatological activity of electing the world in Christ in every new moment. God's act of creating is thus an apocalyptic act in which God radically interrupts us—and, by extension, the whole cosmic order—in Jesus Christ. Creation as new creation (*creatio nova*) is not an objective fact, a visible given; rather, it is an eschatological and existential reality, located in God's future, which irrupts into our present reality in the pneumatic event of the proclaimed Word. When we hear the word of grace in the eternal now, our election and creation are simultaneously actualized and affirmed. To summarize, whereas *creatio continua* is God's moment-by-moment actualization of creation through the Word spoken by God from the beginning, *creatio ex electione* is an apocalyptic event in which that same Word, Jesus Christ, is spoken *to us*. Put another way, *creatio conti-*

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transcends finite, creaturely actions. Therefore, creation does not have a finite beginning and end. It is an eternal action, an event that takes place in eternity. For this reason, it can always occur anew existentially. In God's encounter with us, creation takes place in the "eschatological moment," in the eternal now (*nunc eternum*). Frank writes: "The creation of the world is not an event in this observable and measurable time but belongs to the realm of eternity; it is the very moment when eternity touches upon time and thus makes time measurable for the first time. . . . An eternal moment as that of creation—(any first beginning or ultimate end)—is incommensurable with observable time (duration). Since creation belongs to the realm of eternity, philosophical reason may think of it as being 'at any time,' that is, as a 'continuous or eternal creation.' But imagined as a moment in measurable time, it becomes an 'eschatological moment' to us. To imagine a time before or after time is an obvious fallacy, although we cannot refrain from doing so since we do not have an adequate idea of eternity and can imagine eternity only in terms of time. Yet such an eschatological moment is not a beginning or end *in* time but *of* time. There is no time before or after, only eternity. In such an event the whole world—time, anything—and especially our reason comes to an end." Erich Frank, "The Role of History in Christian Thought," *The Duke Divinity School Bulletin* 14, no. 3 (1949): 66–77 (72).

nua is the moment-by-moment act of God that makes it possible for *this* moment to be the "day of salvation."[52]

In conclusion, creation as *creatio continua ex electione* has a number of advantages over the received tradition of *creatio ex nihilo*. First, *creatio ex electione* upholds the basic insight of *creatio ex nihilo*, since nothing stands behind God's decision to elect; nothing conditions God's self-determination. God's self-determination to be the one who elects and creates is an act of divine freedom to be the God who covenants with humanity.[53] Second, at the same time, my proposal focuses our attention upon Jesus Christ and the reconciliation accomplished in him, whereas the traditional formula distracts us by focusing on nothingness and chaos. The arcane debates over whether matter was already existent when God created the cosmos are both irrelevant and a misunderstanding of what creation actually entails. To speak about our creation is strictly to speak about our self-understanding as those elected and reconciled in Christ. Third, this position does justice to Moltmann's *creatio ex amore*, since election is by its very nature a divine decision of love for the world. And because this electing decision is determinative for God's very being, creation too is rooted

52 The creation-event thus follows the contours of the Christ-event. In the same way that, in my christological proposal, *Christus praeteritus* (the past Christ) and *Christus futurus* (the future Christ) coincide in *Christus praesens* (the present Christ), so too *creatio praeterita* and *creatio futura* coincide in *creatio praesens*. Creation and election occur here and now in the present-tense reality of Jesus Christ who confronts the world anew in every moment.

53 With Schleiermacher, I reject applying the dichotomy of freedom and necessity to God's act of creation. To say that God created (and elected) in freedom is not the same thing as saying that God could have acted otherwise, i.e., that creation (and election) are purely contingent decisions, or that God would still be God had God not elected or created. Such statements—whether or not they might have correct insights—place God within the realm of creaturely antinomies, as Schleiermacher rightly states. God's freedom is not a *liberum arbitrium* (free will); it is rather the expression of God's self-determined identity. Barth can even say that God is "free also with regard to his freedom . . . to use it to give himself to this communion [*Gemeinschaft*] and to practice this *faithfulness* in it, in this way being truly free, free in himself" (*CD* II/1, 303 [rev]; *KD* II/1, 341). God is simultaneously unconditioned and conditioned, or rather he transcends this binary opposition altogether by the fact that God is self-conditioning, self-determining, for the sake of being conditioned and determined for the covenant of grace. Perhaps the most mature statement regarding God's freedom comes in *CD* IV/1, where Barth writes regarding the divine decree: "What takes place is the divine *fulfilment* [*Verwirklichung*] of a divine decree [*Dekret*]. It takes place in the freedom of God, but in the inner necessity of the freedom of God and not in the play of a sovereign *liberum arbitrium*" (*CD* IV/1, 195; *KD* IV/1, 213; original italics restored). Within the freedom of God there lies an "inner necessity," an inner determination to be God-for-us in Jesus Christ. God's creation of the world, since it follows from God's election, flows out of this inner necessity.

in the being of God, and not merely in a voluntary act of the will. Fourth, my alternative articulates the relationship between theological *loci* in a more satisfactory way than the traditional formulation. The doctrine of *creatio ex electione* explicitly connects creation to christology, soteriology, pneumatology, and eschatology. As a result, the first, second, and third articles of the creed are interrelated in a much clearer manner. Fifth, my proposal would preclude the possibility of natural theology from the very start, something I count as quite beneficial. I submit that these advantages make the post-Barthian concept of *creatio continua ex electione* a serious candidate for being the most fruitful doctrine of creation.

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Barth as the Answer: A Response

SUNG-SUP KIM

The two essays by Matthew J. Aragon Bruce and David W. Congdon provide us with excellent presentations of the doctrine of creation. The goals of the two are congruent: a defense and recommendation of Karl Barth's doctrine of creation. But the approaches taken are different. Bruce takes a historical approach by showing how theology has shifted its understanding of God's creation from a literal and scientific account to a theological one that answers who God is and how the creation is related to God. In a very limited space, Bruce guides us deftly from the rise of the problem of creation account in the eighteenth century, through the impressive yet finally unsuccessful efforts to address the problem in the nineteenth century, and finally to Barth's doctrine in the twentieth century as a strong answer to the problem. Congdon, on the other hand, takes a constructive approach by introducing the three theologians who have tried to overcome problems of the classical doctrine of *creatio ex nihilo*. He points out very clearly where these attempts fail and makes a forceful argument for a unique reformulation of the doctrine based on Barth's understanding.

Together the two essays complement each other in an interesting way. Of course, they were not intended so necessarily, and the focus even on Barth differs significantly. Nevertheless, since they both point to Barth as the answer to the various problems in the doctrine of creation, my response will concentrate mainly on Bruce and Congdon's discussions of Barth in the form of making critical observations and raising questions.

TO MATTHEW J. ARAGON BRUCE

Along the way leading up to Barth's doctrine of creation, Bruce traces the gradual breakup of the concord between theology and the natural sciences in the modern age. On the part of the natural sciences, the scientists have become more and more aware that they can explain everything and anything about the observable universe without recourse to a theological knowledge. On the part of theology, the theologians who have taken their cue from Schleiermacher have given up the notion of the doctrine of creation as a scientific cosmogony; instead, they pursue a theological cosmogony which asks not how but why did God create the world. Barth's doctrine of creation, of course, is a theological doctrine in this sense with the focus on who God is and how the world is related to this God.

I wholeheartedly agree that this is the proper focus of theological investigation of creation. Theology does not answer the scientific questions of the origin and formation of the universe, but it offers a unique and indispensable knowledge that science does not know how to seek. At the same time, we are living in the time when we are witnessing increasing efforts to amend this "modern" breakup. The call for dialogue between theology and science is heard today not only within the theological circles that fear being pushed into the corner of irrelevance but also among scientific communities that dread the future of technology-driven society without a human face.

Unfortunately, it is my impression that much of such a talk between theology and science is still largely one directional. The theologians are eager to apply the latest scientific findings to the enrichment of their theological discourse, but it is not often that we hear a strong arguments and objections from theology to science. In this sense, the talk might still be in the "accommodation" phase, albeit in a way quite different from the pre-modern period. The time is fast approaching, however, when theology

needs to say something real to science. In this sense, could we not say that the theological doctrine of creation needs to be "scientific" again?

A properly theological doctrine of creation means for Barth a christocentric doctrine of creation. As Bruce explicates very clearly, Barth prioritizes covenant over creation because God first decides to enter into a relationship with one particular human being, namely Jesus Christ, and with the rest of creatures through him; the decision to create is logically subsequent, not prior. Now, because the purpose of God's creation is to become incarnate in Jesus Christ on behalf of fallen humanity, Barth sees not only the bright (the day) but also the dark (the night) sides of creation as good. Bruce's reading of Barth is exactly right, but I wonder whether the problem of evil is at risk in being underestimated when he further says: "When we aim to affirm God's declaration that his creation is good we must recognize that this refers to both to the salvation and to the sin from which we and the world need to be redeemed" (Bruce, 20–21).

In *Church Dogmatics*[1] III/3 §50, when Barth discusses the problem of evil in terms of nothingness (*das Nichtige*), a force of opposition and resistance to God's rule, he makes it clear that the dark side of creation is not itself nothingness. Nothingness is in a third way with no common ground with God and creatures, and it is not simply nothing either.[2] Yet creation is powerless in the face of sin and evil. Nothingness has a reality in its own way—however peculiar and incomprehensible it may be—and thus sin and evil can never be called "good" even if it leads to the greater good of Christ's incarnation and redemption. Of course, Barth never intends the problem of nothingness to be the final word, for not only the goodness of creation but also the evil of nothingness can be found only in the knowledge of Jesus Christ.[3] Neither should it, however, be glossed over.

In the end, we would have to resort to some concept of permission. In fact, Barth himself argues that the concept of permission, the favorite of the traditional theodicy, has a legitimate place in discussing the problem

1 Karl Barth, *Die kirchliche Dogmatik*, 4 vols. in 13 parts (Zollikon-Zürich: Evangelischer Verlag A. G., 1932–1970); hereafter cited as *KD*. ET Karl Barth, *Church Dogmatics*, ed. G. W. Bromiley and T. F. Torrance, 4 vols. in 13 parts (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1956–1975); hereafter cited as *CD*.

2 *CD* III/3, 349–51; *KD* III/3, 402–3.

3 *CD* III/3, 302; *KD* III/3, 342.

of nothingness—with the condition that it be radically reworked.[4] It would be interesting to ask how this permission relates to the permission to worship that Bruce talks about. The two must be very different in kind, but they both witness to the goodness of God the creator.

TO DAVID W. CONGDON

Congdon's very creative and strong doctrine of *creatio continua ex electione* draws from the "more pneumatic-actualistic conception of election" in Barth and applies it to the doctrine of creation in the form of "a correspondingly actualistic conception of creation as a continuous divine act in every new moment" (Congdon, 48). As a result, the distinction between creation and providence is removed, and God's act of creation is understood as continuous. Obviously, this is a significant departure from Barth who carefully distinguishes between creation and providence and argues: "We must not interpret providence as *continuata creatio* [continual creation], but as a *continuatio creationis* [continuation of the creation]."[5] Congdon is well aware of this point of departure and would probably argue that this is one of the areas where the best of Barth's actualistic insights in the doctrine of election is not developed thoroughly elsewhere.

I greatly appreciate Congdon's efforts to bring out the present significance of the doctrine of creation. The doctrine is not a mulling over of the past alone. Creation is actualized right now and at every moment. The strong Bultmannian emphasis on the work of the Holy Spirit in the present enlivens the trinitarian character of the doctrine of creation in a way that perhaps addresses the charge often (and almost always wrongly) leveled at Barth that his doctrine lacks sufficient pneumatology.

Despite the benefits of Congdon's doctrine, I would like to ask whether we also might lose something when the focus shifts from the once-for-all to the again-and-again aspect of election and creation. The point of election and creation is that we have not contributed anything to it. It is the

4 *CD* III/3, 367; *KD* III/3, 425.

5 *CD* III/3, 8; *KD* III/3, 6.

decision and act on God's part that establishes the incomparable beginning of the relationship between God and us. The prior decision and act are neither reciprocal nor symmetrical with ours. This is what Barth wants to uphold in his distinction between creation and providence. Congdon obviously does not intend to do away with this insight, for in his conception, it is God and God alone who sustains and interrupts us moment by moment. But we could ask this. Does Congdon need to emphasize the actualistic aspect of the doctrine of creation at the expense of the doctrine of providence?

Another question I have is whether there is room for Sabbath in continuous creation. In the creation account in Genesis, God himself rested and did not continue his work of creation on the seventh day. In fact, this is the beginning of Barth's scriptural reasoning for the break between God's work of creation and the work which follows.[6] Of course, God did not stop sustaining the world on the seventh day. God never ceases to be God. At the same time, God is not a ceaseless God. In the overly actualistic conception of creation as taking place moment by moment, when do we find a moment to let go and simply abide in the God whose decision to be our God and whose act of creating the world have already been done?

6 *CD* III/3, 7; *KD* III/3, 6.

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Creation, Theological Categories, and the Spirit: A Response

MELANIE WEBB

David W. Congdon and Matthew J. Aragon Bruce provide two post-Barthian proposals for understanding the doctrine of creation in relationship to the future, overlapping at moments but also diverging at others. They trace the proposals of other theologians in order to demonstrate that these others recognize the problems concomitant with the traditional doctrine of *creatio ex nihilo* and the location of creation within dogmatics generally. Congdon examines Catherine Keller, Jürgen Moltmann, and Friedrich Schleiermacher while Bruce treats Franz Reinhard, Friedrich Schleiermacher, and Gottfried Thomasius. The problems identified in each of these theological proposals share a similar bottom line in both Congdon and Bruce: they are insufficiently christological. Bruce even demonstrates that Karl Barth's theology of creation from his Göttingen period suffered from this same problem. But Bruce and Congdon's acute focus on christology seems to forfeit some of the strengths of theologies that emphasize the relationship between the doctrines of creation and redemption. More centrally locating pneumatology in their respective discussions could help them retain that strength. I will first restate how Bruce and Congdon's proposals reconstrue the relationships between various theological categories, noting benefits and places that need further strengthening, and then consider how pneumatology might address some of the challenges that arise.

Barth's later theology is compelling to Congdon and Bruce because of his ability to expand the boundaries of Jesus Christ's identity such that God, humanity, creation, revelation, redemption, eternity, and time are connected within one subject—Jesus Christ. Neither creation nor the man Jesus is an abstraction because both are given historical particularity and

concreteness in the divine-human person, Jesus Christ. The particularity associated with Jesus' birth, ministry, death, and resurrection is then eternalized, thus inextricably intertwining history and eternity. Through the universalization of Christ's particularity, Congdon and Bruce maintain that abstraction is eliminated.

Because creation is, in Jesus Christ, now an object of inter-triune love, the historical is made eternal by the union of humanity to the Son. Because God's will as creator is directed towards Jesus Christ who is very God, his being as creator becomes (conceptually) indivisible from his will. Moreover, in Jesus Christ, God's self-knowledge becomes God's self-revelation to creation, and his self-love becomes his redemption or sustenance of creation. The content of theology proper becomes coterminous with revelation, which is communicated entirely through Jesus Christ. Furthermore, God and creation enjoy a relationship only in, with, and through the person of Jesus Christ. The covenant is prior to the act of creation such that the act of creation simply provides a theater in which that primordial covenant is actualized.

At this point, Congdon wants an existential acknowledgement of creation's implications for our self-awareness, namely, awareness of the ever-present reality that the elected Christ renders each moment "the day of salvation." Salvation, then, seems to be a matter both of existential experience and objective fact. In effect, Congdon is conjoining subjectivity and objectivity in the person of Christ so that the doctrine of creation does not affirm something that we do not (or cannot?) experience to be true. Fear of an existential disconnect motivates the rejection of an original creation that exists prior to the new creation in Christ. Congdon seems to assume, though he does not state it explicitly, that we cannot know that there was ever an original state that differs from the present state of continuous creation/redemption.

Congdon writes, "whereas *creatio continua* is God's moment-by-moment actualization of creation through the Word spoken by God from the beginning, *creatio ex electione* is an apocalyptic event in which that same Word, Jesus Christ, is spoken *to us*" (Congdon, 51). Congdon's proposal, however, leaves us to infer that sin, death, and sorrow might be the objects of apocalyptic interruption, but we are not told. If this is the case, then

Congdon must be more precise about the nature of continuity he envisions in his proposal. If creation is a continuous act of God in every new moment, why does God keep interrupting himself? We are not told who else there is to interrupt. In other words, given that no doctrine of original (pre-fall, i.e., pre-redemption) creation has a place here, does "interruption" simply become another term for "otherness"?

While from the perspective of subjective (yours and mine) history we might experience moments of unparalleled realization as apocalyptic, does this mean that God is acting apocalyptically? Or are those simply moments in which we come to realize God's otherness from us, i.e., moments in which we become aware of our creatureliness but not necessarily our sinfulness? Or does Congdon consider our creatureliness to be our sinfulness? As it stands, his proposal posits new creation as the only creation but assumes the conditions concomitant with original and fallen creation: "this creative act repeats itself in the justifying word that declares new life to dead sinners" (Congdon, 50). Whence the dead sinners? Congdon assumes them but does not explain them, and his proposal—granted, when pressed—does not seem to allow for their origin.

To understand how the declaration of new life to sinners might work, a re-presentation of Bruce's position proves helpful. According to Bruce, "the very content of creation is God's decision to become incarnate in the person of Jesus Christ on behalf of fallen humanity" (20). Bruce refuses to entertain counterfactual hypotheses, and thus does not consider whether or not the incarnation would have happened had humanity not fallen. As a result, the incarnation can only be considered in light of what is, and the fall is. Nonetheless, God cannot not be good. So "both the bright and dark sides of creation are good, i.e., when we aim to affirm God's declaration that his creation is good we must recognize that this refers to both the salvation and the sin from which we and the world need to be redeemed" (20–21). Here Bruce also avoids the fallacy of division: what is true of the whole cannot be said independently of the parts. Creation as a whole is good, but that does not mean that any given part of creation is good in and of itself. Moreover, the fallacy of composition rules out the possibility of extrapolating a characteristic of a part to the whole. In other words, the sadness and sorrow of one part of creation does not make the whole of cre-

ation sad and sorrowful. Bruce presents the resurrection of Jesus Christ as the purpose and climax of God's plan such that the character of creation can be derived from the character of that one event; i.e., the goodness of the resurrection renders the crucifixion, and presumably all suffering and sorrow, a penultimate good on the way towards the ultimate good of true happiness with God.[1]

While Congdon does not address the reality of evil, Bruce does so briefly. To my theological sensibilities, this simple acknowledgement renders his appraisal of Barth's theology more satisfactory than Congdon's proposal because it prevents the collapse of the doctrine of redemption into the doctrine of creation. Congdon seems to assume the existence of evil in his repeated emphasis on apocalyptic interruption, but he does not specify the object of interruption and thus misses the opportunity to specify how the good news might be one's own. If each moment is an instance of God's *creative* act, whence comes the necessity for an apocalyptic interruption of ourselves and the whole created order? The doctrine of redemption either becomes superfluous by being identified with the doctrine of creation, or merely a matter of existential concern. We are left wondering: Why or how are there humans who do not know God in Christ if God continuously creates/preserves/redeems the world through the election of Christ? So many doctrines are amalgamated that it seems difficult to speak meaningfully as and to those within a fallen, broken world. A nuanced form of this coincidence of theological categories, particularly those of creation and redemption, might be developed through a reappraisal of the Spirit's person and work.

Both Bruce and Congdon repeatedly mention the presence of the Spirit in each aspect of Christ's ministry, but drawing out the personhood of the Spirit in the creative-redemptive activity of God might inject some breathing room where distinctions between theological categories seem to collapse. No doubt both presenters have ways of addressing this, but I will now explore how a pronounced pneumatology could prove helpful. My

1 As Bruce and Congdon both note in different ways, Barth develops his doctrine of creation in tandem with Schleiermacher's notion that creation and preservation are concerned with the world as a system, not with the world as a confluence of particulars. For how such assumptions impact the development of the doctrine of election, cf. Matthias Gockel, *Barth and Schleiermacher on the Doctrine of Election: A Systematic-Theological Comparison* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006).

goal is to address some of the concerns raised by articulating aspects of pneumatology that seem to function below the surface for both Congdon and Bruce.

The source of Jesus Christ's particularity is also the source of our own. As Colin Gunton puts it, "God is what he is only as a communion of persons, the particularity of whom remains at the centre of all he is, for each has his own distinctive way of being . . . [Therefore,] the particularity of created beings is established by the particularity at the heart of the being of the creator."[2] As the agent of creation, the Spirit distinguishes each creature in its situatedness among the rest of creation—separating light from dark, earth from water, Adam from Eve. As the agent of incarnation, the Spirit gives the man Jesus Christ his particular, concrete character as one born to Mary in Nazareth; as the agent of resurrection, the Spirit effects the particular, concrete event that draws life out of death and constitutes the goal of creation. In a parallel fashion, as the agent of creation, the Spirit renders each of us particular, concrete human persons; as the agent of personal redemption, the Spirit renders each of us partakers in the one baptism and remits our sins, guaranteeing our own resurrection.[3] The language of "guarantee" here need not imply obligation or mechanical approval of our future life on the part of God, but instead further identifies God's creative activity with his redemptive activity while keeping them distinct.

In the Spirit, what might otherwise simply be consummation becomes redemption because of the ongoing, interpersonal encounter between *fallen* humans and our Mediator. In other words, it is through the Spirit's work that God has in Christ come into contact with humanity and sinners can come into contact with God in Christ. Whether one takes an infralapsarian or supralapsarian position, acknowledging the reality of sin gives God's consummate glory a redemptive aspect. While the union of eternity

2 Colin E. Gunton, *The One, the Three, and the Many: God, Creation, and the Culture of Modernity*, The 1992 Bampton Lectures (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 191.

3 While Tom Greggs aptly warns against positing two spirits—one that relates to creation generally and one that relates to creation in Jesus Christ—I do not believe that recognizing the distinctive activity of the Spirit in creation makes him any less the one Holy Spirit. See Tom Greggs, *Barth, Origen, and Universal Salvation: Restoring Particularity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 174.

and time happens in the union of God and humanity in Christ, past, present, and future are distinguished in the very fabric of creation by the activity of the Spirit hovering over the deep, raising Christ from the dead, and now sanctifying us so we might anticipate our future with God. In other words, the Spirit creates time, and therefore distinction within theological categories.

In turn, the Spirit makes the future of creation *our* future by uniting us to Christ. The *totus Christus* is only the *totus Christus* because of the *Spiritus sanctus*; the one who unites Father and Son thereby unites God and creation. Jesus Christ is the locus of the fulfillment of God's promise to dwell with his creatures, but the Spirit is the one who works the incarnation's pattern into the fabric of creation by bringing creation into communion with God, and by continuously rendering creation capable of communicating something about the Word. Barth famously writes, "God may speak to us through Russian Communism, a flute concerto, a blossoming shrub, or a dead dog."[4] While proclamation is the stated means of such realization, the Spirit is the mode of this ever-present possibility within each aspect of creation. From an existential perspective, we know Jesus Christ as a reality and become aware of our relationship to him through the Spirit's presence not only with us but within us.

We are distinct from one another because of the distinct activity of the creating and redeeming Spirit in each of our lives. Or, as Tom Greggs says, "while the particularity of the Son has universal effects for all particulars, the universality of the Spirit particularizes that universal to individuals and communities in the present."[5] Bruce's theological construction explores the consequences of the indwelling Spirit in the Church's worship of God without ascribing the significance of temporal forms of worship to the Spirit. But the very temporality of the Church, and all the struggles concomitant with that temporality, is precisely what drives us to a consideration of creation, preservation, and redemption. The process of learning and transforming is a temporal journey towards the once crucified, now resurrected and ascended Christ. The Spirit is the agent who creates the

4 Karl Barth, *The Church Dogmatics*, 4 vols. in 13 parts (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1956–1975), I/1, 55.

5 Greggs, *Barth, Origen, and Universal Salvation*, 14.

space and time for us to existentially ingest the reality of God's identity and, therefore, our own identity.

While creation and redemption, redemption and consummation, and subjective and objective—just to name a few—coincide in Christ, the meaning of their union is predicated upon their distinction. It is my contention that the distinction of such theological categories is made lucid by the Spirit's unique agency in particularizing, among other things, Christ in relation to creation and our creation in relation to our redemption. Without rupturing the identification of theological categories that Bruce and Congdon want to maintain in their proposals, a more developed pneumatology throughout each proposal could provide warrant from within the personal activity of God for communicating vital theological distinctions and, thereby, the full significance of their overlap and identification in Jesus Christ.[6]

6 Suzanne McDonald's recent book develops the multivalent implications of pneumatology for Reformed doctrines of election. See Suzanne McDonald, *Reimaging Election: Divine Election as Representing God to Other & Others to God* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2010).

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To Cultivate and Care for Creation: The Human Vocation as the Unifying Principle for Ecological Theology and Soteriology

DANIEL P. CASTILLO

Lynn White's assertion that the Judeo-Christian worldview is at the root of the modern ecological crisis has served as the impetus for the burgeoning of contemporary Christian "ecological theology."[1] As numerous theologians of varied denominations and disciplines stepped forward to answer White's charge, they began to recover the ethic of ecological responsibility that permeates scripture and the Christian tradition. Thus, White should be thanked for educing these rich theological responses that are now helping to reframe the mainstream understanding of the manner in which Christianity calls its practitioners to relate to creation.

Nevertheless, these developments have not been entirely happy in their outcomes. Willis Jenkins observes that Christian theologians have tended to respond to White's criticism that Christianity's focus on salvation leads it to disregard creation, by underplaying the Christian salvation narrative and, instead, emphasizing Christian cosmology.[2] Thus, Jenkins writes, much of contemporary Christian ecological theology has been informed by a "suspicion of salvation stories" that leads theology to tend to avoid making its soteriological concepts "visible."[3]

The development of Christian ecological theology that suppresses the narrative of salvation is perilous. If ecological theology and soteriology are

1 See Lynn White, "The Historical Roots of Our Ecological Crisis," *Science* 155 (1967): 1203–7.

2 Willis Jenkins, *Ecologies of Grace* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 10–15.

3 Jenkins, *Ecologies of Grace*, 10.

not shown to be reconcilable, then Christianity—which ultimately cannot rescind its proclamation of the good news of salvation in Christ—will be left vulnerable, once again, to the anti-environmental charges leveled by White.

The aim of this essay is to articulate a biblical-theological narrative that explicitly locates ecological concern within salvation history. In order to carry out this task, I will unite the themes of ecological concern and salvation by grounding them in a theological vision of the human vocation, built upon Genesis 2:15. I will then consider the effects of sin on both humanity and humanity's ability to carry out its vocation. Third, I will argue that it is Christ who fulfills the human vocation and, in doing so, redeems humanity and provides the model upon which a Christian environmental ethic should be based. Additionally, this essay will show that the biblical narrative connects the historical realities of the oppression of the poor and the destruction of the earth in a way that facilitates a parallel connection between ecological theology and liberation theology.

"TO CULTIVATE AND CARE FOR CREATION": THE HUMAN VOCATION

In considering the human vocation, it is helpful to begin by reflecting upon the etymological root of "vocation." Vocation is derived from the Latin word for *vocare* meaning "to call." Thus, as Parker Palmer writes, "Vocation does not mean a goal that I pursue. It means a calling that I hear."[4] Palmer's definition is helpful. However, we must go further by acknowledging that a call anticipates a response. Thus, a vocation implies work on the part of the hearer.

Here it is necessary to distinguish between "work" and "job," for in today's industrial and post-industrial societies the two are often conflated and taken to mean the same thing. However, at their roots, job and work connote two very different realities. As Matthew Fox notes, job (derived from the Middle English word *gobbe* meaning "lump") originally referred to compartmentalized piece-work, the type of work that became ubiquitous

4 Parker Palmer, *Let Your Life Speak* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2000), 4.

with the onset of the industrial revolution and still permeates present-day labor structures. Fox quotes an eighteenth-century dictionary's definition of job as: "petty, piddling work; a piece of chance work."[5]

In contrast to the fragmented form of labor implied by job, work connotes a form of labor and praxis that engages the totality of the human person. As Dorothee Soelle argues, a key characteristic of authentic work is that it entails creative self-expression.[6] We pour ourselves into our work. Thus, our work comes to symbolize who we are. Moreover, we are not only symbolized by that which is produced by our work, we also express ourselves through the entire creative process that takes place when bringing something to bear.[7] For example, if I craft jewelry from sea-glass that I have collected along the beach, not only will the finished product come to say something about me, but also my actions throughout the entire process—from arranging the patterns to patiently drilling holes within the glass—come to express, at least in part, my hidden interiority. Our work draws us out, making us more of who we are within our own life's history. Put simply, through our work we enact who we are.

The ecstatic nature of work points to its social dimension. In pouring ourselves out through our work, we are able to express ourselves in a manner that can be shared with others. In quoting E. F. Schumacher, Soelle notes, "the goal of good work 'is to liberate ourselves from our inborn egocentricity.'"[8] In symbolizing who we are, our work allows us to make ourselves present to others in a way that could not be possible otherwise. Thus, work allows us the possibility to see and be seen by each other more fully than if we did not enter into work. Work expands our capacity for communion with one another.

From both the creative-symbolic and socially constructive nature of work we are able to discern that the work to which one is called through a vocation is meaningful and sacred. However, we must affirm that a vocation's ultimate meaning and sanctity are not found within the work itself,

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5 Matthew Fox, *The Reinvention of Work* (San Francisco: Harper, 1994), 6.

6 Dorothee Soelle with Shirley Cloyes, *To Work and to Love* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1984), 83–92.

7 For an in depth discussion of this point, see Roberto Goizueta, *Caminemos Con Jesus* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1995), 77–131.

8 Soelle, *To Work and to Love*, 96.

nor does its ultimate meaning come from the subject who enacts the work. Rather, as with all things, a vocation's meaning and sacredness are ultimately rooted in God, the "ground of meaning." Thus, when we affirm that a vocation is a call and that the right-response to such a call entails sacred and meaningful work, we can affirm that the call ultimately issues forth from God, the one who is the speaker of the Word.[9]

In sum, a vocation encapsulates both the call to carry out sacred, self-expressive, and communion-building work, as well as the right-response to this call. This call is issued forth from the mouth of God, in whom it finds its ultimate meaning and sanctity, and is heard and responded to by the human person.

The affirmation that human persons are able to hear God's call is rooted in the traditional understanding of what it means for the human person to be created in the image of God. As Claus Westermann argues, the "image of God" refers to "the person as God's counterpart." For Westermann, *imago Dei* describes "the special nature of human existence by virtue of which the person can take a stand before God . . . a human being is one whom God can address as 'You' and an 'I' who is responsible before God."[10] Westermann, quoting J. J. Stamm, asserts that the "basic meaning of the *imago Dei* is that of partnership, of ability to enter into relationship."[11] Following this line of thought, Zachary Hayes maintains that "we are created in the image of God in order that something can happen between God and ourselves."[12]

In order to support its assertion that the human person is made in the image of God, Christian theology traditionally looks to Genesis 1:26, where that claim is explicitly made. However, when we carefully consider the *Yahwist* (J) account of creation in the second chapter of Genesis, we find, embedded in the narrative, a more nuanced reference to the notion of the human person as *imago Dei*. As Walter Brueggemann observes, the J

9 When the ordering principle of the *Logos* meets the hearer, the Word is received as a Call to cooperate with the mission of the Word. Therefore, in terms of human reception, the Word and Call are synonymous.

10 Claus Westermann, *Genesis 1–11: A Commentary*, trans. John Scullion (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1984), 150.

11 Westermann, *Genesis*, 151.

12 Zachary Hayes, *A Window to the Divine* (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1997), 56.

account of creation depicts God as a gardener.[13] In this account God plants a garden in Eden by cultivating the ground (2:8–9). What is noteworthy is that God subsequently calls Adam to "cultivate and care" for creation (2:15). Here, God calls Adam to the vocation of a gardener: one who would serve creation by mindfully cultivating and caring for the earth and all of its creatures.[14] Thus, it is apparent that caring for creation is at the heart of what it means to be created in the image of God, that is to say, what it means to be human.

We must note that the *imago Dei* imagery of the J account does not merely affirm the belief that the human person is a hearer of the Word. Instead, it assumes that human persons can hear the call of God and then suggests that it is only in properly responding to God's call—that which is the human vocation—that the human person is able, most fully, to image God. In this sense, the *imago Dei* is intrinsically tied to praxis and must be appropriated by the human person over the course of her or his life. We conform ourselves to God's image by correctly responding to God's call. As we will explain below, this dynamic is analogous to the Eastern notion of Christification, which discerns that the Holy Spirit is active in history laboring to conform humanity to the image of Christ.[15] The process of Christification can be thought of as the in-breaking of God's saving work into history. Thus, we are able to affirm that both ecological concern and the process of salvation are intrinsically tied to the human vocation as we have articulated it in light of Genesis 2:15.

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13 Walter Brueggemann, *Genesis* (Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1982), 46.

14 By no means do I intend to suggest that all human persons must now take up an agrarian lifestyle. Rather, the vocation of "gardener" serves as a metaphor that underscores the posture of active care that God calls all of humanity to adopt towards creation. Thus, nearly all concrete vocations can manifest or reject the vocation "gardener." For example, a scientist can work for the just healing of creation or for its destruction.

15 Christification, also referred to as deification or *theosis*, has its roots in the thought of the patristic theologian Irenaeus and has been prominent throughout the history of Eastern theology. For a modern Eastern approach to Christification, see Sergius Bulgakov, *The Lamb of God*, trans. Boris Jakim (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2008).

"LET US MAKE A NAME FOR OURSELVES": THE REJECTION OF THE HUMAN VOCATION

In order for a human person to respond to the call of God in an authentic manner, the human person must be understood as a possessor of freedom. Freedom is what makes it possible for us to actualize ourselves through creative and symbolic work. It is a great gift but it is also fraught with peril because, to use Karl Rahner's terminology, as free subjects we are "threatened radically by guilt."[16] In other words, because we are uniquely blessed with both the ability to discern the call of God and the freedom to respond to that call, we are also uniquely accountable for our response to that call and possess the singular freedom to reject our vocation by refusing to cooperate with the work of the Spirit. Thus, our consideration of the human vocation and its relationship to the Christian narrative of salvation leads us to examine, explicitly, the reality of sin.

On the personal level, sin is our turning away from the God who calls us to make God's desires our own and to cooperate with the work of the Spirit in "cultivating and caring" for creation. Sin results in the wounding of our dialogical relationship with God. We become impaired hearers and indifferent or reluctant responders. We reject our vocation to be God's co-workers in the garden; co-workers who would labor to finish all of creation in love.

We see, then, that sin not only impedes our personal openness to God but that it also disrupts the flow of history. Hayes writes that "as sin entered into human history, the flow of history was diverted from the end which God intended for it."[17] Hayes further posits, "once sin has become a part of human history, it reaches out further and further like the rings of water when we drop a stone into a still pool. . . . Sin is a power of evil at work in the history of the human race from the start, and it reaches out in every direction to touch all."[18] Sin touches all of creation and in doing so

16 Karl Rahner, *Foundations of Christian Faith*, trans. William V. Dych (New York: Crossroad Publishing, 2005), 90.

17 Hayes, *Window to the Divine*, 73.

18 Hayes, *Window to the Divine*, 64.

forestalls the liberation and fulfillment for which "all of creation is groaning" (Rom 8:22). Not only does sin damage our ability to hear God's call and respond to that call, it also, consequently, impairs our relationship with creation. We are called by God to enter more fully into solidarity with creation by laboring and accompanying creation—as a gardener labors in her or his garden—but sin frustrates the vocational process.

This reality is expressed symbolically in scripture. Thus, in the *Yahwist* account in Genesis (2:1–3:24), Adam and Eve exist in a paradisal world—they "cultivate and care" for creation as God had instructed them, they exist in open and intimate relationships with their Creator, with each other, and with creation—until sin enters and disorders their relationships. Then, Adam and Eve hide from their God in shame; they clothe themselves, hiding from each other. Moreover, Adam and Eve are forced out of the garden. Sin ruptures the human vocation.

Sin, of course, cannot be thought of solely on the personal scale. One of the greatest developments during the last fifty years of theology is the renewed emphasis on the social and structural reality of sin. Liberation, political, feminist, and womanist theologies throughout the world have shown that any view that simply wishes to privatize and personalize sin is not able to adequately articulate the destructive nature of its power. Instead, we must affirm that, as sin enters into human history and spreads out to touch all of creation, it does not simply affect social relationships on the personal level, but rather it exerts influence on the whole of society including social systems and institutions. Personal sin gives rise to social and systemic sin. Thus, sin permeates and shapes our socio-political, economic, and religious structures.

Stephen Duffy asserts that, "Social sin is not an evil act of one or even several persons that adversely affects society." Rather, social sin is the dynamic of sin that shapes both the collective conscience and the structures of institutions, societies, and cultures. Duffy argues that there are four major manifestations of social sin. First, it is found in "dehumanizing behavior patterns of institutions that incarnate a people's life." These patterns create a collective bias—within the persons they form—towards the sin that is inherent within the institutions. Second, "social sin permeates cultural (including religious) symbols that grip imaginations, fire hearts,

and reinforce unjust institutional arrangements." Thus, group bias gives rise to ideologies that serve to legitimize the institutional structures. Third, "social sin is at work in the false consciousness spawned by institutions and ideologies that allows people to participate in a network of oppression with self-righteousness." In other words, because sinful institutions present their value-systems as sacred, persons who have been conformed to the value-system of a sinful institution see even the sinfulness of that institution as holiness. Lastly, according to Duffy, "social sin is embodied in the collective decisions and consent generated by distorted consciousness."[19] Thus, because the sinful institution forms the consciousnesses of persons, the decisions and actions of these persons are controlled by the value-system of the institution and, therefore, merely serve to reinforce the ethos of the institution.

We are born into a world that is suffering from the cumulative effect of thousands of years of humanity's disordered desires and collective blindness. Thus, the world that forms us—that is, the world's social, political, economic, and religious systems—has been formed by our history of sinful desire. In effect, these systems have become mirrors of human sinfulness. Simply by existing within and being formed by our societal structures today, we become complicit with the "sin of the world."

In his argument, Duffy highlights how these sinful structures give rise to a world that actively works to drown out the call of God. These structures produce their own distinct idols. These idols engage us in dialogical relationships that lead us to turn our attention away from our proper dialogical relationship with God (Rev 13:13–14). In effect, these idols enthrone themselves as gods and offer their own versions of what we are called to be/do as human persons. These systems thus disorient/reorient us away from our proper relationships with God, creation, and other human persons. They hold up distorted understandings of relatedness—both horizontally and vertically—as the ideal. As a result, they both promote and embody the loss of humanity's vocation.

If we continue further in our reading of the *Yahwist* account, we find that its author also symbolically denotes the structural reality of sin. In

19 Stephen Duffy, *The Dynamics of Grace* (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1993), 363–4.

the story of Cain and Abel (Gen 4:1–18), we see the power and effect of sin become embodied systemically. After Cain kills Abel—giving the world its founding murder—we find that Cain becomes still further alienated from creation, God, and his fellow humanity. We are told that he travels east, where he eventually builds the world's first city.

Cain's identification with the city is significant. Whatever our personal biases towards contemporary urban areas might be, today we tend to think of the city as a theologically neutral concept. In scripture, this is not the case. Rather, there, the city functions as a symbol of hubris, domination, and oppression.[20] It is not coincidental that, according to scripture, the first city was founded by a murderer. The Hebrews, who were enslaved in the cities of Egypt, were familiar with the dark side of the city and were aware that the aims of the city ran counter to God's desires. This becomes clear when we consider closely the stories of Babel (Gen 11:1–9), Sodom and Gomorrah (19:1–29), Nineveh (see the Book of Jonah), and Babylon (Rev 17:1–18:24). Even Jerusalem—ostensibly, the holy city of God—is presented in a negative light within the New Testament: Jesus is thoroughly unimpressed with its grand structures and Temple (Mk 13:1). The heroes of the gospel, (e.g., Jesus, and John the Baptist) consistently appear on the margins of society (in the wilderness, the desert, or in small villages), while those portrayed as resistant to the in-breaking of God's reign (the Pharisees, scribes, and imperial prefects) are repeatedly identified with the city (Mk 1:4; Matt 2:1–18; Lk 4:1–14).[21]

In light of all this, the city can be understood as a metaphor for social and systemic sin; it is the structural embodiment of our rejection of God's call to us.[22] To use Jon Sobrino's term, the city is symbolic of the "anti-

20 See Jacques Ellul, *The Meaning of the City* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1970). See also, Wes Howard-Brook and Anthony Gwyther, *Unveiling Empire* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2000), 162–84.

21 For commentary on the relationship between the world's centers of power and the person and ministry of Jesus, see Ched Myers, *Binding the Strong Man: A Political Reading of Mark's Story of Jesus* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1998). See also Warren Carter, *Matthew and the Margins* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books), esp. 17–23.

22 To use Walter Wink's term, the city can be thought of as the embodiment of the "domination system." For more on the notion of "domination-system," see: Walter Wink, *Engaging the Powers* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1992), esp. 51–63.

kingdom."[23] Personal sin has led us to construct systems that aim at dominating and oppressing both other human persons as well as the rest of creation. Cain's act of city-building solidifies humanity's rejection of its vocation. In effect, what we witness, when we read about Cain's construction of the first city, is the lamentable antithesis of Isaiah's vision of peace (Isa 2:4). In Cain, humanity has taken its plowshares and pruning hooks and beaten them into swords and spears: the requisite tools of the exploitative and oppressive systems that seek to expand their reach and both perpetuate and normalize injustice. Through its sinful actions, humanity adopts a praxis of domination and constructs systems that work against God's call.

Here we must emphasize that the city is not only the locus of human enslavement and oppression; it is also the structural embodiment of our abuse of creation. This reality is captured most vividly in the book of Revelation. There, the merchants and traders of Babylon not only bring humans into the city to sell as slaves; they also bring "gold, silver, precious stones, and pearls; fine linen, purple silk, and articles of ivory and all articles of the most expensive wood, bronze, iron, and marble; cinnamon, spice, incense, myrrh, and frankincense; wine, olive oil, fine flour, and wheat; cattle and sheep, horses and chariots (Rev 18:11–13)." The litany is long and points to the breadth of the city's exploitative process: all of the earth is plundered to feed Babylon's disordered desires. The litany also makes clear that the same structures that dehumanize persons, so as to make them slaves, objectify all of creation in order to exploit and dominate it.

Theologians of varying denominations have underscored this connection in recent years. For example, Elizabeth Johnson, along with many other eco-feminist theologians, has elucidated many of the parallels that exist between the manner in which both women and the earth are devalued and abused by the patriarchy of the Western world.[24] Elsewhere, James Cone has connected the sin of racism to environmental destruction. As Cone writes, "The logic that led to slavery and segregation in the Americas, colonization and apartheid in Africa, and the rule of white supremacy throughout the world is the same one that leads to the exploitation of ani-

23 Jon Sobrino, *Jesus the Liberator*, trans. Paul Burns and Francis McDonagh (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1993), 160.

24 See Elizabeth Johnson, *Women, Earth, and Creator Spirit* (New York/Mahwah: Paulist Press, 1993).

mals and the ravaging of nature. It is a mechanistic and instrumental logic that defines everything and everybody in terms of their contribution to the development and defense of white world supremacy."[25] What the insights of scripture, Johnson, and Cone make clear is that, to use Leonardo Boff's phrase, "the cry of the earth" is "the cry of the poor."[26]

GOD'S CALL THROUGHOUT SCRIPTURE

After sin enters into the biblical narrative, what becomes of the human vocation? Is it irrevocably lost? Does the noise of the city, with its merchants, kings, and idols, effectively drown out God's call, erasing it from human memory? Does God, out of frustration at human obstinacy, cease to speak Her Word of Wisdom into our lives? The answer to the question of what becomes of the human vocation runs through the length of the biblical narrative. What follows, then, is a general overview of the narrative that aims to describe its major contours as well as highlight some of the points that are most pertinent to the argument of this essay.

In Genesis, we find that after Cain builds the city, his descendants increase through the generations (4:17–26). The spirituality—the ethos and praxis—of the city gains a greater foothold in history. Creation is further neglected by humanity and, in the words of Brueggemann, becomes "increasingly scattered, alienated, and hostile" (6:1–13).[27] God ultimately finds that the world has spun out of control and brings forth a flood to destroy the earth so that the earth might be created anew. In reflecting upon the story of the flood, Brueggemann writes, "The narrative begins by bringing us face to face with the God of Israel. This God takes with uncompromising seriousness his own purposes for creation. And he is impatient when those purposes are resisted. God holds an expectation for his world. He will not abandon it."[28]

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25 James Cone, "Whose earth is it anyway?" *Cross Currents* 50, no.1–2 (2000): 36.

26 Leonardo Boff, *The Cry of the Earth, The Cry of the Poor*, trans. Phillip Berryman (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books). Boff considers this connection most explicitly in chapter 4, "All the Capital Sins against Ecology."

27 Brueggemann, *Genesis*, 66.

28 Brueggemann, *Genesis*, 77.

Accordingly, God seeks a new beginning with humanity through Noah and his family. In this new creation God reestablishes the human vocation.[29] However, we find that post-flood humanity again quickly eschews its vocation and once more begins the work of establishing cities (Gen 9:18–10:32). This is highlighted by the establishment of Babel—a city which aims at uniting the entire world over and against God's purposes (11:1–9). Here, God responds once more to humanity's sinful recalcitrance. This time God does not eradicate the city but, rather, God confuses the tongues of the inhabitants of the city and scatters its inhabitants across the whole world.

Up until this point, according to the narrative, God has worked with the whole world, calling all of humanity to take up the human vocation and cooperate with the work of the Spirit who desires to restore all of creation. However, it is at this point that God focuses God's call. As Brueggemann writes, "The one who calls the worlds into being now makes a second call. This call is specific. Its object is identifiable in history. The call is addressed to aged Abraham and to barren Sarah. The purpose of the call is to fashion an alternative community in creation gone awry . . . . It is the hope of God that in this new family all human history can be brought to the unity and harmony intended by the one who calls."[30] Here we see that God's call is not lost. Instead, God now turns to Abraham and Sarah and calls them into a covenant, for the purpose of bringing forth a people that will respond to God's call and fulfill the human vocation (Gen 12:1–9; 15:1–15). As John Fuellenbach notes, "The Covenant with Israel is the first historically visible step of God to affect the promise made to Adam after that initial rejection."[31]

However, if the first eleven chapters of Genesis can be understood as the dramatic interplay between a faithful God and a recalcitrant world, then nearly all of what follows in the Old Testament describes the parallel interplay between a faithful God and the recalcitrant people of Israel. As Fuellenbach argues, "The Covenant . . . proved to be a failure with respect

29 Brueggemann, *Genesis*, 82.

30 Brueggemann, *Genesis*, 105.

31 John Fuellenbach, *The Kingdom of God* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1999), 214.

to Israel's response. The history of the Covenant people became a history of a broken Covenant; the people were unable to respond in a way that could have made the Covenant the new creation."[32] Israel repeatedly shows itself to be an unfaithful covenant partner. For example, the twelve tribes of Israel, with their decentralized power schematic, complain to Samuel that they desire a king like the other nations—the alternative community that God calls Israel to bear witness to is rejected in favor of a model that more closely resembles the oppressive dynamic of the city (1 Sam 8:19–20).

In other places, the prophets rail against Israel's failure to do justice and its lack of compassion for the poor and the oppressed. Rather than restoring and fulfilling what it is to be truly human, Israel is frequently drawn toward the seductive power of the domination system. Nevertheless, as the narrative consistently emphasizes, God remains faithful to Israel. God labors relentlessly to restore the nation and, through the nation, all of creation.

JESUS, GOD'S REIGN, AND THE FULFILLMENT OF THE HUMAN VOCATION

The history of humanity's obstinacy in general, as well as Israel's in particular, can be summed up by Paul's remark, "While claiming to be wise, they became fools" (Rom 1:22). Rather than hearing the Word that God speaks—that is, the Wisdom of God—and responding to it properly, humanity glorified its own wisdom: the wisdom of the city. As a result, humanity, along with all of creation, has been held in bondage to the wages of humanity's own fallacious wisdom. However, it is the Christian belief that, in God's faithfulness to Israel (a faithfulness that ultimately extends to the whole world), the Spirit has opened humanity in a new way to the call of God through the person of Jesus Christ. In Christ, we find that the covenant, the human vocation, and all of creation reach their salvific fulfillment.

In the person of Jesus, God's call has become flesh. Jesus is so radically open to God's call that he is revealed to be united with that call. In Jesus,

32 Fuellenbach, *Kingdom of God*, 214.

we find that the Word and the hearer of the Word are one. Thus, Jesus is shown to be both fully human and fully divine.[33] What is more, through his utter obedience to the Father, who is the speaker of the Word, Christ fully appropriates the human vocation within his own life. It is for this reason that Paul can proclaim Jesus to be the "last Adam" or the "final Adam" (1 Cor 15:45; Rom 5:1–21). Christ brings to fulfillment the vocation that Adam rejected through sin; in doing so Christ reveals himself as the perfect image of God.

Here we should recall it is "the city"—those systems of oppression and violence that grow out humanity's sinful rejection of the human vocation—that Sobrino terms the "anti-kingdom." In contrast to this reality, Christ embodies God's kingdom. As Fuellenbach writes: "Jesus is the Kingdom in person, the 'auto-*Basileia*,' or, as Origen put it: 'Jesus is the Kingdom of God realized in a self.'"[34] However, Jesus was not a monad. Rather, the presence of God's kingdom within him was expressed in his mode of relating to the whole of creation. By embodying God's kingdom, Christ also proclaimed and enacted it in history. Walter Wink asserts that God's kingdom, as enacted by Christ, is revealed as a domination-free order that is defined by sacrificial love and nonviolence.[35] In a similar vein, Sobrino argues that God's reign is a liberating reality that frees the poor and the oppressed from the dehumanizing structures of sin.[36]

As we have already argued, the oppression of the poor and the degradation of the earth are intrinsically linked. Therefore, we can assert that God's kingdom is meant to extend to the entirety of creation. As Denis Edwards argues, "In the limited and finite life of Jesus there is unleashed an explosive dynamism of compassion that knows no boundaries."[37] Edwards continues by observing that the divine compassion of God's kingdom "is directed toward the whole world. It reaches out beyond the human

33 As Rahner posits, "In its ultimate and highest phase [human] self-transcendence is identical with an absolute self-communication of God." See Rahner, *Foundations*, 198. Rahner makes this argument within an evolutionary view of the world; see Rahner, *Foundations*, 178–203.

34 Fuellenbach, *Kingdom of God*, 220.

35 Wink, *Engaging the Powers*, 109–137.

36 Sobrino, *Jesus the Liberator*, 87–104.

37 Denis Edwards, *Ecology at the Heart of Faith* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2006), 49.

community to embrace 'all things' . . . (Col 1:15–20)."[38] God's kingdom, then, can be thought of as the "anti-city," in this sense: it is the social and structural reality that grows out of the human person's act of reclaiming and fully appropriating its vocation to "cultivate and care" for creation.

THE NEW ADAM AS THE FOUNDATION FOR A CHRISTIAN ENVIRONMENTAL ETHIC

It is with the in-breaking of God's reign that God's new creation takes root: the "final Adam" inaugurates the "new '*adama*'" (the new earth). However, God's kingdom does not end with the historical death of Jesus. Instead, human persons are now called to appropriate the call of God into their own lives by imaging Christ through the Holy Spirit. In returning to our previous theme, we find that the process of Christification and the process of fully appropriating the human vocation into our lives are not two distinct processes. Rather, they are revealed to be one and the same. As we have already noted, this process is the realization of salvation within history. Human persons cooperate with God's saving work when they more fully allow the Spirit to conform them to their authentic vocation—that of cultivating and caring for creation—as it is supremely exemplified by Christ.

This is why, as Paul tells us, all of creation waits with "eager expectation" (Rom 8:19) for the coming of the children of God (those whose own lives have been conformed to the life of Christ), for it is these persons who will work, in cooperation with the Spirit, to bring all of creation to its fulfillment—so that God may one day be all in all. It is the "children of God" who, in being called out of the city, will beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks (Isa 2:4). They will no longer study the ways of the city or participate in a praxis of domination. Instead, they will care for all of creation as a good shepherd cares for his flock. The Spirit that, through Christ, is poured into the world at Pentecost will guide the actions of the children of God in renewing the earth and liberating the poor. As Isaiah prophesied, "When the spirit from on high is poured out on

38 Edwards, *Ecology at the Heart of Faith*, 49.

us, then will the desert become an orchard, and the orchard be regarded as a forest. Right will dwell in the desert and justice abide in the orchard. Justice will bring about peace; right will produce calm and security. My people will live in a peaceful country, in secure dwellings and quiet resting places" (32:15–20).

Indeed, we find that, ultimately, the city itself is redeemed. The destructive and oppressive city of Babylon is replaced by the New Jerusalem; a city from which life-giving water flows and in which the fruits of the trees provide healing for all nations (Rev 22:1–2).[39] Thus, we find that Christ and all those who have been conformed to Christ, through the power of the Spirit, work to make "all things new" (21:5).

CONCLUSION

This essay began with the premise that it is theologically hazardous to articulate an ecological theology that renders soteriology invisible because any attempt to do so would place ecological theology on a trajectory that is ultimately un-Christian and, thus, would leave Christianity open to renewed charges that it is hostile to the environment. Therefore, this essay sought to connect ecological concern to the biblical-theological narrative of salvation by relating them both to the human vocation of the gardener found in Genesis 2:15 and then relating that vocation to Christ. By demonstrating this connection, we are now able to affirm that ecological concern is at the heart of the saving process of Christification that has already begun in history; this is a salvation that is good news for the whole of creation.

39 Although, as we have argued, God's kingdom can be thought of as the "anti-city," God's kingdom does not eradicate the city. Instead, through the Holy Spirit, God radically transforms the city. Along these lines Walter Wink argues that the powers will be redeemed. See Wink, *Engaging the Powers*, 65–85.

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The Garden of Eros: Creation and Chaos in *Paradise Lost* and the Song of Songs

BY ELAINE JAMES

John Milton's works provide a famously rich source for discussions of allusion and intertextuality, and there's no shortage of material documenting classical and biblical sources for Milton's epics. For the most part, *Paradise Lost* has been read as the story of Genesis 2–3, embellished with the flora and fauna of the classical pastoral drawn from Ovid, Homer, Horace, Diodorus, and others. What has gone little remarked, however, is how Milton draws on the Song of Songs for his depiction of the garden.[1] The first task of this presentation, then, is a descriptive one: I will briefly sketch some of the ways I detect the Song of Songs in *Paradise Lost*. Then, I will make some suggestions about the significance of Milton's evocation of the Song of Songs. The "Garden of Eros" (to which my title refers), in Milton's epic, locates both the goodness of creation and its fragility in the erotic relationship between two young lovers. Not only does the Song of Songs serve as an imagistic palette for the depiction of the abundant and fructive garden in *Paradise Lost*, it also provides a theological framework for the persistence of chaos in this divinely created order.

The seventeenth-century context has a keen interest in the Song of Songs, and it should be noted, by way of introduction, that the book itself was quite prominent in public life during Milton's time. Sermons, tracts, translations, and paraphrases were readily undertaken and widely distrib-

1 Samuel Rogal's *An Index to the Biblical Reference, Parallels, and Allusions in the Poetry and Prose of John Milton*, for instance, records only four allusions to the Song of Songs, and these are in reference only to isolated verses, not to an overall conception of the garden (Lewiston: Mellem Biblical Press, 1994).

uted in England.[2] In fact, in 1549, the very first collection of verse printed in the English language was William Baldwin's *Canticles, or Balades of Solomon*, a translation of the Song of Songs. While the biblical book was extremely popular, it was also viewed as highly problematic. The Song of Songs' meaning was an interpretive crux during this period that constituted one fault line (with political consequences) between Puritans and radical groups like the Ranters.[3]

Knowing what we do of the radical, brazen John Milton, it comes as no surprise that his works are also in the fray: His poems "Il Pensero" (lines 17–18), "On the Morning of Christ's Nativity" (line 50), and "The Masque" all cite the Song of Songs, and in his prose texts, notably *Christian Doctrine* and *Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce*, the Song of Songs emerges as a topos for discussing human love and sexuality. All of this—the text's cultural prominence at the time, its controversial nature, and Milton's use of it elsewhere—bolster the possibility that Milton's descriptive garden in *Paradise Lost* draws on and alludes to the Song of Songs.[4] I will argue that these allusions emerge in the landscape of Eden, in the sensual abundance of the creation. Drawing on the Song of Songs allows Milton to carefully map *eros*, the sensuality of human love, onto the prelapsarian garden. Secondly, I will suggest that Eve's dream sequence in Book 5 of *Paradise Lost* is lifted explicitly from Song of Songs chapters 3 and 8, and it is here that Milton finds support for a vision of love that accommodates the possibility of its own violation.

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2 Stanley Stewart, *The Enclosed Garden: The Tradition and the Image in Seventeenth-Century Poetry* (Milwaukee: University of Wisconsin Press, 1966), 9.

3 Noam Flinker, *The Song of Songs in English Renaissance Literature: Kisses of Their Mouths* (Cambridge: D.S. Brew, 2000), 119.

4 Additionally, as Mary Ann Radzinowicz has pointed out, Milton's lifelong study of the Christian scriptures anecdotally supports this. His personal library included a 1612 edition of the King James Bible as well as a Geneva Bible. *Milton's Epics and the Book of Psalms* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989), xi.

CREATION

The garden of the Song of Songs is the setting for love, and its ripeness suggests the lovers' readiness for an erotic encounter. Springtime's fullness—the sprouting of figs and the ripening of the grape—suggest nature's welcoming and blessing of the lovers' union, and the connection between vegetable reproductivity and food that is good to eat describes an abundantly rich subsistence economy whose centerpiece is the analogously rich and fruitful consummation of human love. This theme is an elaboration of the biblical creation account (especially Gen 1:28–30) that connects the creation of humans, the command to multiply, and the fecundity of plants of the garden. This connection has not gone unnoticed by commentators as far back as Origen, who understood the Song of Songs to be, in some ways, a representation of the ideals of the Garden of Eden. This theme of ripeness, of fruit ready on lush trees, is specifically evoked by Milton in his description of the garden:

> And higher than that wall a circling row
>
> Of goodliest trees loaden with fairest fruit,
>
> Blossoms and fruits at once of golden hue
>
> Appeared, with gay enameled colours mixed (PL 4.147–50)

The created garden in *Paradise Lost* is conceived as a central, enclosed space that is distinct from the wilderness around it. The following description of paradise is the first in *Paradise Lost*, and it comes via Satan, in his initial approach to the garden:

> So on he fares, and to the border comes
>
> Of Eden, where delicious Paradise,
>
> Now nearer, crowns with her enclosure green,
>
> As with a rural mound the champaign head

> Of a steep wilderness, whose hairy sides
>
> With thicket overgrown, grotesque and wild,
>
> Access denied (PL 4.130–38)

This description of paradise establishes tension between wilderness outside the garden and the order and cultivation within it. Similarly, in the Song of Songs, the *hortus conclusus*, the "garden enclosed," is the primary descriptor for the girl and forms the central image in the poems, as love is metaphorized as "a spring shut up, a fountain sealed" (Song 4:12).[5] While the protected nature of the garden is not part of the Genesis account, it is crucial to the Song of Songs, as it both inscribes and eroticizes the boundaries that prevent consummation, and the desire to transgress those boundaries and consummate love. So in Song of Songs 2:9, the girl says, "My beloved is like a roe or a young hart: Behold, he standeth behind our wall; he looketh in at the windows; he glanceth through the lattice." Similarly, the walled garden both prohibits Satan from entering it (he "had journied on, pensive and slow; but further way found none, so thick entwin'd, as one continue'd brake, the undergrowth," PL 4.173–75); but it also allures him, and after he leaps into the garden, he looks out over the terrain from a tree and finds it "a happy rural seat of various view; Groves whose rich Trees wept odorous Gumms and Balme, Others whose fruit burnisht with Golden Rinde Hung amiable . . ." (PL 4.247–50).

Within this eroticized, walled garden of Eden, the sensual exoticism is reminiscent of that which surrounds and entices the lovers of the Song of Songs. For instance, the luxuriant spices that waft on the winds of Eden are

> . . . gentle gales Fanning their odoriferous wings dispense
>
> Native perfúmes, and whisper whence they stole
>
> Those balmy spoils . . . (PL 4. 156–59)

And in the Song of Songs:

> Awake, O northwind, and come thou South, blow upon my garden, that the spices thereof may flow out. (Song 4:16)

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5 Scripture references are taken from the Authorized Version (1611). *The Holy Bible: An Exact Reprint in Roman Type, Page for Page, of the Authorized Version Published in the Year 1611* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985).

In the biblical book, the narrator imagines the spices on a course from the farthest reaches of Africa: "Spikenard and Saffron, Calamus and Cynamom, with all trees of Frankincense, Myrrh and Aloes, with all the chief spices" (Song 1:13; 4:14; cf. 3:6; 4:6; 5:1, 5, 13; 8:14). In *Paradise Lost,* Raphael travels

> Into the blissful field, through groves of myrrh, And flowering odours, cassia, nard, and balm; A wilderness of sweets (PL 5.292–294)

The exoticism of the Song of Songs provides a rich sensual tapestry that allows Milton to create a garden in which the human body and its senses are celebrated aspects of creation.

Indeed, relishing sensory abundance is a crucial theme throughout both texts: the Song of Songs' frequent descriptions of feasting, for instance, are echoed by Milton's extensive description of the food that Eve prepares for Adam and Raphael (PL 5.341–49). In both texts, the enjoyment of food is an act of relishing and consummation that is closely linked to sexuality. Eating is the expression of vitality, enjoyment, sustenance, and pleasure shared by the lovers and celebrated by the friends: "Eat, friends, drink, and be drunk with love!"(4:9–5:1). This helps explain what otherwise seems like a pure figment of male fantasy in *Paradise Lost*, which is the description of Eve serving food naked (PL 5.443–46). The mystery of eating, which takes its profoundest pleasure in the fertility of the earth, is the readiest symbol for the mystery of love, and the interconnection between the two permeates the Song of Songs: "Stay me with flagons; comfort me with apples: for I am sick of love" (2:5).

Adam's conversation with Raphael is a good starting point for understanding sexuality in *Paradise Lost* (PL 6.600–11). Like the delicious foods the garden provides, Eve's presence is an inexorable force that seduces him, albeit without lust. Adam describes their erotic relationship:

> . . . these delicacies
>
> I mean of taste, sight, smell, herbs, fruits, and flowers,
>
> Walks, and the melodies of birds; but here
>
> Far otherwise, transported I behold,
>
> Transported touch; here passion first I felt,

> Commotion strange, in all enjoyments else
> Superior and unmoved, here only weak
> Against the charm of beauty's powerful glance. (PL 5.526–33)

"Beauty's powerful glance" is a force Eve possesses, an experience also expressed by the boy in the Song of Songs, who describes his helplessness to resist the girl's gaze: "Thou hast ravished my heart, my sister, my spouse; thou hast ravished my heart, with one of thine eyes, with one chain of thy neck" (Song 4:9). Milton calls on the mythological power of love expressed in the Song of Songs and invests Eve with the frank, self-assured, and unashamed desire of the biblical erotic. The observation that "Then was not guilty shame, dishonest shame/Of nature's works" (PL 4.313) could easily be a summary of the bold words of the girl in the Song of Songs: "My beloved is mine, and I am his. . . . By night on my bed I sought him whom my soul loveth" (Song 2:16; 3:1).

This brief overview is meant to be suggestive: throughout *Paradise Lost,* Milton supplements the depiction of the created Garden of Eden with rich sensory details from the Song of Songs. If pervasive allegorizing systematically disconnects the physicality of the body from its sensuous experience, Milton's insistence on describing Adam and Eve in their physicality reconnects creation with its erotic potential.

CHAOS

While the created goodness of the Edenic garden in *Paradise Lost* follows and affirms the trajectory of the Song of Songs, all is not perfect in either garden. Eden, in *Paradise Lost*, which is not simply cultivated, but also "wild": "Flowers worthy of Paradise which not nice art/ In beds and curious knots, but nature boon/ Poured forth profuse on hill and dale and plain," (PL 4.241–44) and the garden itself is "tending to wild" (PL 9.209-12). Such descriptions suggest a struggle between nature and cultivation.[6] Labor is the daily instituted obligation of Adam and Eve in the garden, and it makes a claim on the lovers. Adam awakes Eve to their work with these

6 On this tension, see John R. Knott, "Milton's Wild Garden," in *Studies in Philology 102* vol. 1 (2005): 66–83. Cf. *Renaissance Ecology: Imagining Eden in Milton's England,* ed. Ken Hiltner (Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press, 2008).

words: "the fresh field calls us, we lose the prime, to mark how spring our tended plants" (PL 5.20–21). This labor, though protected by the wall and its divine keepers, is subject to forces wild and Satanic. In the Song of Songs, too, the wildness of nature encroaches on the garden, and it is the work of agriculture that defines love and keeps the garden. Nature's wild regions in the Song of Songs (the desert, the mountains) abut the arable, cultivated landscape that is the principal locus of love, and the lovers go forth from the city into the fields to agricultural activities that are associated with lovemaking (2:12; 6:11; 7:11). The girl and the boy are both seen as shepherds, gardeners, and vinedressers whose labor is intent on preserving the land's fertility. The lovers' labor hedges against the wilderness and threats to tasks necessary to human flourishing, both of which play at the edges of the Song of Songs, not letting the reader forget that labor can be a joy and delight, but that death lingers throughout, making labor not a choice, but a necessity. Lions and leopards wait in their dens (4:8), watchmen patrol the walls (3:3; 5:7), the foxes ruin the vines (2:15), and so just as a vine-dresser must therefore watch over the vines, and as a shepherd much carefully attend the sheep, so must the lovers guard their love.

The powerful personification of love appears in *Paradise Lost*, and is accompanied by cautions against love's danger: "Here Love his golden shafts employs, here lights/ His constant lamp, and waves his purple wings," (PL 4.763–64). The possibilities of dangerous liaisons are discussed at some length following this ascription (PL 4.765–70), which suggests the powers of love for pleasure and fulfillment, as well as for destruction. This hearkens to the depth and power of love personified in the Song of Songs: "I charge you . . . that ye stir not up, nor awake my love, till she pleases" (Song 2:7). In the most famous passage of Song of Songs, love personified becomes a formidable mythological force:

> Set me as a seal upon thine heart, as a seal upon thine arm: for love is strong as death, jealousy is cruel as the grave: the coals thereof are coals of fire, which hath a most vehement flame.
>
> Many waters cannot quench love, neither can the floods drown it: if a man would give all the substance of his house for love, it would utterly be contemned. (Song 8:6–7)

Here, love is described as a cosmic force, contending with the chaos waters common in ancient Near Eastern cosmogony. In both texts, *eros* constitutes a crucial moment in overcoming death and destruction, even while *eros* itself entails great risk.

The "wild" aspects both within and without the gardens of *Paradise Lost* and the Song of Songs prevent us from reading either text with easy distinctions between innocence and experience, leisure and labor, creation and chaos. As Adam and Eve experience sex and labor together in the garden, they do so as moral agents in the full sense, "not propelled into sin by some inevitable developmental process but consciously choosing to disobey the divine mandate."[7] Their sexual agency, drawn from the model of the Song of Songs, is what gives their erotic relationship its substance, while simultaneously opening the lovers to the moral freedom to fail.

This openness to failure is especially visible in the dream sequence of Eve in Book 5 of *Paradise Lost*. In this scene, Adam awakes from sleep and turning, beckons to Eve to wake as well, that they might go into the field to work together. This section reflects Song of Songs 2:10–13 and 7:11–12, where the boy beckons to the girl to come away from the town to consummate their love. Even more clearly allusive, though, is the dream sequence that Eve recounts upon awakening: "methought/Close at mine ear one called me forth to walk with gentle voice, I thought it thine . . . I rose at thy call, but found thee not; To find thee I directed then my walk" (PL 5.35–37; 48–49). This alludes to the dream sequence of the girl in the Song of Songs, in which she imagines rising from bed in search of her lover:

> By night on my bed I sought him whom my soul loveth. I sought him, but I found him not. I will rise now, and go about the city in the streets, and in the broad ways I will seek him whom my soul loveth: I sought him, but I found him not. (Song 3:1–2)
>
> I sleep, but my heart waketh: it is the voice of my beloved that knocketh, saying, Open to me, my sister, my love, my dove, my undefiled: for my head is filled with dew, and my locks with the drops of night . . .

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7 Susan Synder, *Pastoral Process: Spenser, Marvell, Milton* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998), 12. Cf. Barbara Lewalski, "Innocence and Experience in Milton's Eden," in *New Essays on Paradise Lost*, ed. Thomas Kranidas (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1969), 16.

> I opened to my beloved, but my beloved had withdrawn himself, and was gone: my soul failed when he spake: I sought him, but I could not find him: I called him, but he gave me no answer. (Song 5:2, 5–6)

Milton uses the motif of the sleeping girl searching for her beloved in order to adumbrate the danger implicit in the freedom of the garden. For Eve, it is danger (Satan, although she does not yet know it) come to her under the guise of love; in the Song of Songs, the danger comes to the girl as she pursues her absent lover. For both texts, the goodness of erotic love opens the door (literally) to the possibility of its own violation. When the girl in the Song of Songs leaves her bed, she enters the liminal space of the city, where she encounters the watchmen on the walls who are at first indifferent to her.[8] In the second encounter, the poem has much more erotically charged imagery. Here, she is not simply looking for her lover; she hears his voice, her "coat" has been "put off," and her hand at the lock, "dropped with myrrh, and my fingers with sweet smelling myrrh," fumbles for his hand, which is "by the hole of the door" (5:3–6). When she fails to find him at the door, she again goes out into the city, and in parallel to the escalation of desire, the response of the watchmen is also violently escalated. They encounter the girl in the city, and she says, "they smote me, they wounded me, the keepers of the walls took away my veil from me" (5:7). Here, the implicit dangers and vulnerabilities of love are made explicit.

In *Paradise Lost*, Uriel and Gabriel are described as the true guards of the garden (PL 5.570, etc.). However, there is a corrupting force at work—these good watchmen fail, and Satan enters the garden. Tracing the allusion to the Song of Songs closely, after entering the garden, Satan himself becomes the new patrolling watchman (PL 4.528–29) who breaches and ultimately provides the choice for Eve to degrade the lovers' garden. Like the watchman of the Song of Songs, Satan circles the walls, where he becomes a pillaging wolf:

> . . . As when a prowling wolf,
>
> Whom hunger drives to seek new haunt for prey,
>
> Watching where shepherds pen their flocks at eve

8 In Song 3:3, she inquires of them where she might find her beloved, and is rewarded by holding him fast, such that she would not let him go.

> In hurdled cotes amid the field secure,
>
> Leaps o'er the fence with ease into the fold. (PL 4.183–87)

In both *Paradise Lost* and the Song of Songs, even in the walled metaphorical garden of love's delights, there is the possibility of its corruption, and the vulnerability of the lovers opens them to the hostilities of the world.

Milton uses this theme of vulnerability as an intrinsic part of Eden. Like the dreaming girl in the Song of Songs, Eve commits to seeking her lover alone, and at night. When Eve encounters the pseudo-watchman in the garden, he appeals to her like the lover at the door in the Song of Songs whose "head is filled with dew, and my locks with the drops of night" (Song 5:2). Satan too has "dewy locks" that "distilled/ Ambrosia" (PL 5.56–57). Eve is led to the tree of interdicted knowledge (PL 5.48–52), where Satan takes on the form of a sinister lover: "he drew nigh, and to me help/ Even to my mouth of that same fruit held part/Which he had plucked" (PL 5.82–84). Both the erotic quality of moral danger, and the moral danger of erotic life, are intrinsic to the garden. For Milton, as indeed for the Song of Songs, the possibility of danger and corruption constitutes the essence of freedom that enables paradisal love to exist.

Milton evokes the Song of Songs at a crucial moment in *Paradise Lost* to suggest that *eros* and chaos are interwoven. Thus paradise is not a simple or unassailable place, but rather it is unstable, fragile, and subject to disaster; its flourishing—or its defeat—is only accomplished through the active participation of humans with the divine will, or with the forces of chaos and malevolence. The health of the world is envisioned as dependent on vigilant maintenance and creative labor of humans agents.[9] I would relate this paper to the *future* of creation—as our conference is entitled—by this emphasis on the moral imperative of land care, since both of the texts I have discussed today explicitly connect agriculture with love. Love between human beings can nurture love for the earth in practices of cultivation. Lest we delude ourselves with romanticizing either nature or love, though, these texts insist that this order is never entirely safe and free. Reading the Song of Songs in light of Milton's *Paradise Lost*, and vice versa, heightens the connectivity between ecology, love, and permeabil-

9 Barbara Lewalski, "Milton's Paradises," in *Renaissance Ecology: Imagining Eden in Milton's England*, ed. Ken Hiltner (Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press, 2008), 16.

ity. This permeability, its fundamental instability, has a tragic quality. We all know the outcome of the story of Eden; we see the girl in the Song of Songs beaten by guards; we have all been witnesses to the breaches of love. In the light of both these representations of the garden as a locus of love, we are compelled to acknowledge that the abuse of the earth, and its neglect, fall into the same tragic category.

In sum, I take Milton to be a sensitive reader of the Song of Songs, and his conception of Eden suggests we return to the biblical account of creation. Labor is not simply the result of the Fall, on this reading, but an intrinsic part of the created order that is always engaged with land care and the fertility of the earth (and indeed, such a reading can be sustained by both creation accounts in Genesis). On such a reading, Milton and the Song of Songs insist that we see creation as an erotic landscape, which is sensual and fertile, but always subject to a tragic permeability that involves us in moral choices about labor, cultivation, and land care.

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Types of Eco-Theological Ethics: A Response

KENNETH A. REYNHOUT

As I write this response I am painfully aware of the fact that thousands of gallons of crude oil continue to spew daily into the Gulf of Mexico from a ruptured deep-sea oil well off the coast of Louisiana. The full extent of the harm inflicted on the ecosystem by this human-created disaster is not yet known, but given the massive volume of oil released by the leak and its deep undersea point of origination, the ecological damage surely will be severe, widespread, and suffered for many decades to come. As corporations and politicians are busy pointing fingers and saving faces, the question of how religious beliefs shape our attitudes toward environmental responsibility has not yet entered the public discussion. But like the massive oil plumes that currently swirl under the ocean, we can expect that it is only a matter of time before this question rises to the surface. In the United States, however, there is no single Christian view of ecological ethics, and it is common to find people of faith on both sides of the many debates regarding environmental concerns. We would presumably all admit that God created the world, but we seem to have very different views about whether, why, and how we should care for that creation and its future. Some of this division is undoubtedly fueled by an unfortunate confluence of ecclesiastical and political partisanship, but some of it may also be due to a relative dearth of eco-theological reflection.

I am therefore pleased to see that the three papers to which I am responding all make positive contributions to this important question of eco-theological ethics, each from a different angle and offering uniquely provocative insights. Daniel P. Castillo, for instance, reminds us that caring for creation is an integral part of a human vocation oriented toward the eschatological goal of becoming like Christ. As such, from a Christian

perspective our commitment to ecological responsibility arises out of the Christian salvation narrative and relates closely to a demand for social justice. Nathaniel Van Yperen[1] points to the deep human intuition, broadly shared across cultures, and expressed by individuals both religious and secular, that the natural world is a kind of "sacred" place that possesses an intrinsic value worth preserving and nourishing. The fact that we largely share this intuition suggests to me that an ontological or even theological reality may be supporting the value of nature, although Van Yperen rightly notes that as a matter of practical ethics we need not agree on the metaphysical details. Elaine James directs us to the rich resources of both Milton's *Paradise Lost* and the Old Testament book Song of Songs for articulating a broader, biblical understanding of creation. Specifically, there are reasons to suspect that even when creation is construed as a "paradise" it is not a simple state of perfection, but is rather an ambiguous, fragile, and even tragic place, an "erotic" landscape requiring our embodied presence and moral attentiveness.

These three proposals clearly express differing approaches, but they are not mutually exclusive. They share a common concern for articulating an understanding of creation that can support and inform a human, moral obligation to care for that creation. In different ways and to varying degrees they are thus each attempting to express an environmental ethic informed by theological principles. In what follows I would like to capitalize on this interdisciplinary connection by returning to one of the books Castillo first references, which is the recently published *Ecologies of Grace* by Willis Jenkins.[2] Jenkins outlines three general strategies for developing an environmental ethic in a Christian theological context, which he calls the strategies of ecojustice, Christian stewardship, and ecological spirituality. What I find most fascinating is that the eco-theological positions of our three papers roughly correspond to these three strategies, and so I have decided to use Jenkins's categories and analysis to structure and inform my treatment of these proposals.

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1 Van Yperen's paper, "The Sacred in the Natural World," was originally included in the Koinonia Forum, but was removed from publication for personal reasons by the author.

2 Willis Jenkins, *Ecologies of Grace: Environmental Ethics and Christian Theology* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008).

Jenkins first describes what he terms the strategy of "ecojustice." Within this category we find approaches that fund environmental ethics by first establishing the intrinsic integrity and value of the natural world. This task can be approached from either a religious or a secular perspective, and in each case the "integrity of creation" makes respect for nature morally obligatory. We must treat the earth well because the earth deserves to be treated well. In a Christian context such respect for nature typically develops out of an understanding of God's relationship with the created world, a relationship that can be considered independently of human beings. One could affirm, for example, that a degree of divine grace permeates all creation, and that such grace is what allows all created things to be. Divine grace quite literally provides creation with its existential integrity: it grants creaturely existence and holds things together. As the bearer of divine grace, then, creation bears inherent value, and warrants its own right to justice.[3]

Jenkins identifies Jürgen Moltmann as a contemporary advocate of this type of approach to environmental ethics, and points to Thomas Aquinas as a classic example of a position that coordinates natural integrity with sanctifying grace. I also see a resemblance here to the theistic position of Robert Adams as Nathaniel Van Yperen has described it.[4] Adams connects God and creation via the Platonic idea of the Good: God is the infinite Good whereas creatures are finite goods that in some sense "resemble" or "image" the transcendent Good. The images of the Good found in finite creatures, human or natural, are valued by God and deemed "excellent." Any such judgment of excellence amounts to an "objective moral fact," a shared moral ascription that Adams believes is experientially accessible to both theists and non-theists alike, which is how Van Yperen connects the views of Adams to those of the non-theist Jeffrey Stout.[5] According

3 Jenkins goes further, connecting this view to a soteriology. God's relation to creation is part of the way God establishes relations with human beings: "Right relations with God require right relations with God's creation, which by virtue of its own relationship with God, calls for a moral response." (Jenkins, 64) Conversely, the degradation of nature distorts human relations with God and others, such that human sanctification is to some degree dependent on our environmental care.

4 Robert Merrihew Adams, *Finite and Infinite Goods: A Framework for Ethics* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999).

5 Jeffrey Stout, *Democracy and Tradition* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004).

to Van Yperen, Stout's modest pragmatism also supports the conclusion that some moral judgments can be considered objectively right or wrong, but unlike Adams, Stout refuses to provide a metaphysical explanation for such moral objectivity. Van Yperen argues that Stout would nevertheless agree with Adams that the destruction of the wilderness, for example, is a kind of violation, presumably as a betrayal of some measure of intrinsic value.

It is possible that ascribing nature with a measure of intrinsic value may already make too much of a metaphysical claim for a pragmatist like Stout, but it does nonetheless appear that when applied to environmental concerns the ethics of Adams and Stout represent two varieties of Jenkins' ecojustice strategy, at least insofar as we can assert that the earth deserves the presumption of value which then secures our objective moral obligation to defend it. Van Yperen hopes that a practical, theological approach to environmental ethics might lie somewhere between these two models, but I have one concern that could temper his enthusiasm. Specifically, how should we go about ascribing value to the natural world? Even if we affirm the essential goodness of God's creation, as a practical matter we must still identify where such goodness lies. Unfortunately, nature does not always make such ascription very easy.

It is true that we could each walk into our favorite national park, look around, stand in awe of the beauty and majesty of nature, and say with full and sincere conviction that it is good and worth preserving (especially if the choice is between our favorite park and another shopping mall), but here the devil is in the details. The problem is that "nature" is an ambiguous thing, full of beauty and ugliness, opportunities and dead-ends, prosperity and extinction, life and death. Nature is not all blue skies and sunshine; it is also "red in tooth and claw," as Tennyson famously phrased it. After Darwin we have a better idea of why this is so, and why it is in some sense necessary, but it can still make ascriptions of value difficult. If a natural blight threatens a stand of virgin forest, are we compelled to step in to preserve the forest? Does not the organic disease deserve the same level of respect as the trees? If a natural predator threatens an endangered species, do we take sides or do we let nature fend for itself? If ecojustice is

our model, how can we measure justice when nature competes with itself as a matter of course?

Jenkins' second type of theological environmental ethics he refers to as the strategy of "Christian stewardship." This approach focuses primarily upon the human person and their responsibilities before God. As a part of our call to be in relation with God, God has entrusted us with the responsibility to care for creation. The moral significance of nature lies not in some intrinsic value of nature by itself, but rather in the way that "grace constructs nature as the environment of God's love for the world, which good stewards inhabit responsibly."[6] It is God's will that we care for creatures, and our proper response to God's providential care for us is to obey God through our stewardship of environmental resources. There are many biblical references that can and have been used to support such a strategy, most notably through a friendly understanding of God's instructions to "subdue" the earth and "rule" over the animals found in Genesis 1:28, a reading often justified by a reference to the softer exhortation of Genesis 2:15 to "cultivate" and "keep" the earth.[7]

This model of environmental ethics predominates in American evangelicalism, and Jenkins also locates this strategy in the christological anthropology of Karl Barth. Among the three papers at hand, I think it is clear that Daniel P. Castillo's description of the human vocation to cultivate and care for creation echoes this type. Castillo has an apologetic motivation: he is concerned that Christianity may continue to be held responsible for our ecological crisis unless we can more clearly connect an eco-theology to a narrative of salvation. This is related to but not identical with Jenkins' primary task. In Jenkins' typology all three of the general strategies for articulating a Christian environmental ethic carry with them an implicit soteriological orientation, but, as Castillo points out, these connections are often suppressed. This is a problem, Jenkins maintains, because in dialogue with secular environmentalists we too often succumb to the cosmological contours of "worldview" politics, which tends to obscure and neutralize the real ethical power of our theological convictions.[8]

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6 Jenkins, *Ecologies of Grace*, 77.

7 Jenkins, *Ecologies of Grace*, 80.

8 Jenkins, *Ecologies of Grace*, 11.

Nevertheless, Castillo does elegantly articulate a fine example of a stewardship environmental ethic that connects our vocation as "gardeners" with the saving process of Christoformity. Such a model has some commendable traits, not the least of which is its ability to integrate a biblical understanding of what it means to be made in the image of Christ. However, all Christian stewardship strategies risk an anthropocentric overemphasis that can work to undercut the very affirmation of nature that stewardship intends to uphold. Specifically, such strategies can easily reduce the natural world to merely the stage for a performance in which God is the director and humans are the actors. If God values nature, God does so only because creation is the medium through which we are saved. But if this is true, then ultimately why should we care all that much about the environment? Even though we should be stewards of creation because God commands it and it is evidently good for us, without some intrinsic value of its own nature can only have value as a means and not as an end in itself.

Confronting such anthropocentrism can come through affirming our deep connection with nature, and Jenkins' third type, the strategy of "ecological spirituality," has this as a central focus. Approaches in this category frequently affirm the evolutionary origins of the human species, arguing that a full explanation of spiritual personhood must be rooted in our own natural history. This strategy typically connects and distinguishes God, humans, and creation through a cosmic comprehension of deification, understood as an intensive participation in divine life. On this view, environmental issues matter to us because we are ecological beings in communion with nature, a relationship that is spiritualized via our participative communion with God. This type of eco-theological ethic has the advantage of affirming both the integrity of creation characteristic of the first type and the anthropological responsibility of the second, since it treats "creation's integrity and human dignity as essentially related moral concerns and nonrivalrous moral interests."[9] Because of this dual strength, I see great promise in this category of eco-theological ethics, and would like to see more Christian ethicists working in or near this approach of ecological spirituality.

9 Jenkins, *Ecologies of Grace*, 96.

Jenkins associates this strategy with Maximus the Confessor and Sergei Bulgakov, although he is clear that it is not limited to Eastern Orthodox voices. It would be saying too much to claim that Elaine James's paper belongs to this third type, but I do detect a certain affinity. I am not qualified to comment on James's treatment of either Milton or the Song of Songs, although she certainly makes intriguing connections. I can confidently say, however, that her analysis does underscore an important and underappreciated fact: the bible espouses no single view of creation. The book of Genesis already suggests this truth, but other books, such as the Song of Songs and Job, make this point absolutely clear. Importantly, these alternative sources tend to suggest a more ambivalent understanding of creation. In James's interpretation of the Song of Songs, for example, both *eros* and chaos were already interwoven in the garden, such that labor comes not as a result of a fall into sin, but rather exists as an "intrinsic part of the created order." This suggests that creation is both an erotic and a chaotic landscape, which means that it is not only "sensual and fertile" but also susceptible to misfortune. Moreover, we belong to and participate in this ambiguous created space, which is where I see a connection to Jenkins' strategy of ecological spirituality. The environmental ethic that emerges from James' paper stems from a strong sense of our embodied connection to nature, one which does not deny the ambiguity of a created world shaped by evolutionary forces, but asserts our moral responsibility to actively participate in such an uncertain world.

In conclusion, it should be noted that Jenkins's typology of approaches to eco-theological ethics suffers from the same weaknesses common to all such classifications. Specifically, it can never capture every nuance of specific theological proposals, viewpoints which may in fact share features with more than one of the types he identifies. Undoubtedly, in my eagerness to classify I have likely elided over important details in the three papers at hand. Nevertheless, I still find his typology pedagogically useful, and hope that its inclusion here can help guide us toward making informed judgments as we consider the important question of how we, as Christians, will choose to articulate our moral support for the environment in an increasingly global, pluralist, and technological world. After all, as we are learning now in a most painful way, the future of creation may be at stake.

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Finding Ourselves There: Martin Heidegger's Notions of Place and What They Might Mean for Preaching

ADAM W. HEARLSON

In his article "Four Decades of Theology in the Neighborhood of Martin Heidegger," Heinrich Ott, Karl Barth's successor at Basel, recalls the first time he met Martin Heidegger. Ott was a student of Rudolf Bultmann at Marburg and was instructed to meet Heidegger in the Black Forest. There, in Heidegger's secluded cabin, Ott and Heidegger spoke for hours about the relationship between philosophy and theology. Ott remembers being struck by Heidegger's reticence when speaking about theology and realized then that "real questions cannot be answered at once."[1] In his article, Ott explains that for the most part he has attempted to mirror Heidegger's trepidation and has worked hard to stay away from quickly appropriating the whole of Heidegger's thought for any purposes outside philosophy. Yet, writes Ott, there are still "beams of insight which Heidegger's thought shed on my theological way."[2] This "encounter on the way" is for Ott the proper relationship between philosophy and theology. Philosophy and theology are not enemies warring for academic supremacy; they are partners and should mutually inform each other when they converge on certain particular questions. Ott writes,

> The sort of eclecticism resulting from this interplay is not to be despised. One need not accept in toto a philosophical system or philosophical way. On the contrary, philosophers think about specific phenomena and questions. If they come to insights, it is also worthwhile for us as

1 Heinrich Ott, "Four Decades of Theology in the Neighborhood of Martin Heidegger," *Église et Théologie* 25, no. 1 (1994): 87.

2 Ott, "Four Decades," 87.

> theologians to notice them as well, especially if we, on the basis of our premises, must be interested in the same phenomena and questions.3

Ott's notion of eclecticism calls for an interdisciplinary collaboration between two disciplines that share the same questions. Throughout the length of this paper, I plan to lead the discipline of homiletics into an "encounter along the way" with the philosophy of Martin Heidegger with the hope that Heidegger's work on place and human "being" might provide "beams of insight" on our homiletical way. It is not my intention to answer the "real questions all at once," but rather to add another voice to the discussion about distance, space, and place in the homiletical act.

MARTIN HEIDEGGER'S SENSE OF PLACE: SITUATEDNESS, TECHNOLOGY, THE FOURFOLD, AND DWELLING

It is supremely difficult (some would say impossible) to find a specific destination toward which the later work of Martin Heidegger tends. One gets a hint from the title of his book, *Holzwege*,[4] that Heidegger deliberately refuses to systematize his philosophical ideas. *Holzweg* literally means "timber track." A *Holzweg* is a path that cuts through the Black Forest so that woodcutters might carry their lumber back to the mill. These paths wind in and through the forest, stopping where there is optimal access to the trees. These stopping points are not destinations. The woodcutters might extend the path further so that it connects to another path, or they might turn back and cut off a new path. This image of a labyrinth of *Holzwege* that extend though the forest is a fitting analogy for Heidegger's thought. There is no linear trajectory of thought in Heidegger. His various works often retread the same ground before diverging drastically from each other. This philosophical meandering is not especially easy for Heidegger's readers. Without a strict linear philosophical progression to follow, it becomes very difficult to discern the philosophical consequence of Heidegger's work. This is intentional. Heidegger worried that philosophy had become

3 Ott, "Four Decades," 88.

4 This title was entitled *Off the Beaten Track* when it was translated into English and published in 2002. Cf. Martin Heidegger, *Off the Beaten Track*, trans. Julian Young and Kenneth Haynes (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002).

too cozy with science and technology so that finished thoughts and totalizing viewpoints displaced the activity of thinking. In order to allow Heidegger's "beams of insight" to shine light upon homiletical ideas of place and distance, we cannot simply journey toward a specific destination; we must meander with Heidegger down the path of *place* and point out how this path has been shaped by its intersections with technology, "the fourfold," "dwelling," and poetry. While it is my intention to show how Heidegger's understanding of place might provide helpful insight for homiletics, this paper will not exhaust the consequences of Heidegger's thought on homiletical space/place.

The role of place in Heidegger's later thinking is an important, albeit often hidden, idea in Heidegger's thought.[5] Notice that central to Heidegger's ideas about being is the fact that being always finds itself *there*. Dasein literally means "being there." Heidegger's thinking, through all of its twists and turns, is always revolving around the simple and everyday phenomena of being in the world. That is, Heidegger is primarily concerned with the manner in which being is inextricably tied to its place within the world. As Jeff Malpas writes in *Heidegger's Topology: Being, Place, World*, being and place are "bound together in a way that does not allow one to be merely seen as an 'effect' of the other, rather being emerges only in and through place."[6] For Heidegger, human being cannot be understood outside of place. Human existence is always situated within a particular world. Contra Descartes, who believed that the mind was acting independently of the surrounding world, Heidegger asserts that the presence of thoughts and feelings are only possible for a human that is a "being in the world." As Mark Wrathall writes, "For Heidegger . . . our way of

5 It should be noted from the very outset that the understanding of place in Heidegger's thought has had very problematic consequences in Heidegger's own life. A direct line can be traced from Heidegger's involvement in the National Socialist Party to his ideas about place, homeland, and rootedness. The fact that Heidegger's views were congruent with Nazi ideology provides good reason to tread cautiously through Heidegger's work. Yet, Heidegger's troubling past should not preclude us from trying to understand Heidegger's ideas concerning place. As Jeff Malpas writes, "Simply to reject place because of its use by reactionary politics is actually to run the risk of failing to understand why and how place is important, and so of failing to understand that the notion can, and does, serve a range of political ends, including those of fascism and totalitarianism, as well as progressivism." Jeff Malpas, *Heidegger's Topology: Being, Place, and World* (Boston: MIT Press, 2008), 27.

6 Jeff Malpas, *Heidegger's Topology*, 6.

being is found not in our thinking nature, but in our existing in place with particular things and established ways of doing things."[7] Heidegger is not primarily concerned with the individual and contextual characteristics of our situatedness (though situatedness will always be personal); rather, his main goal is to speak about the situation of being that is normative for all human beings, which, according to Heidegger, is the fact that, "Dasein is an entity which, in its very being, comports itself understandingly toward that being."[8] *Dasein* takes a stand on its own being in its own situated place in the world. This ability to reflect on being separates *Dasein* from all other types of being. As situated beings we find our existence rooted in a world that we cannot escape. Simultaneously, to be situated in this world means also to question the nature of our own situatedness.

For Heidegger, the very fact that we find ourselves in a predetermined context represents our inability to choose the world we are engaged in, yet our ability to question our context opens up the possibility of engaging different places. Or as Mark Wrathall puts it, "My 'there' itself is shot through with the tension between my freedom to decide my own life, and my subjection to things I can't decide."[9] In short, *Dasein's* ability to question its own being—its "questionability," so to speak— is directly related to its situatedness. There is a closed circle in which the ability to question is dependent upon a *Dasein* "being there," while *Dasein* "being there" depends upon its ability to take a stand upon itself and question its own being. If either of these essential qualities is handicapped, we are pulled out of our own situatedness and the nearness and distance of all "things" evaporates. According to Heidegger, the most dangerous threat to our situatedness is technology.

In the essay, "The Thing," Heidegger begins by enumerating the ability of technology to abolish distance, writing, "All distances in time and space are shrinking. Man now reaches overnight, by plane, places which formerly took weeks and month of travel. He now receives instant information,

7 Mark Wrathall, *How to Read Heidegger* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2005), 15.

8 Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, trans. John Macquarrie and Edward Robinson (New York: Harper Perennial, 1962), 78.

9 Wrathall, *How to Read Heidegger*, 32.

by radio, of events which he formerly learned about years later, if it all."[10] Heidegger explains that though distance is shrinking we are not necessarily getting nearer to anything because nearness is not an empirically measurable entity.[11] Moreover, as distances shrink, everything becomes uniformly distanceless and the "thing" as thing disappears. Now, it is important not to confuse a thing with an object. The distinction between the two is very important. In "The Thing," Heidegger examines a jug and notes that the jug is "self-supporting, or independent," and "stands on its own."[12] Yet, when the jug is turned into an object, it is then understood as it relates to our human experience. When this happens, "the thingness of the thing never comes to light, that is, it never gets a hearing. This is the meaning of our talk about the annihilation of the thing."[13] Like the famous hammer example in *Being and Time* that becomes objectified when we examine it, the jug loses its thingness when our attention turns from active use to examination. Heidegger writes, "No representation of what is present, in the sense of what stands forth and of what stands over and against as an object, ever reaches to the thing *qua* thing."[14] According to Heidegger, science is the primary culprit in the objectification and consequent annihilation of things. The fact that science seeks to standardize and generalize precludes it from ever apprehending the thing *qua* thing. Moreover, as David Cerbone writes, "Scientific practice thus requires an indifference to, indeed an intolerance of, what we might call particularity."[15] Science is

10 Martin Heidegger, "The Thing," in *Poetry, Language and Thought*, trans. Albert Hofstader (New York: Harper, 1971), 163.

11 What nearness actually is is an important question. In *Being and Time*, nearness is used to describe *Dasein*. *Dasein* is that which is ontically near but ontologically distant. Cf. Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 36. Yet, in Heidegger's later works, nearness takes on a new connotation in relation to "the thing." Heidegger writes, "Nearness, it seems, cannot be encountered directly. We succeed in reaching it rather by attending to what is near. Near to us are what we usually call things." Heidegger, "The Thing," 164. Nearness and the thing are tied together. The world and the thing are brought near only through the happening of the fourfold. The *Nähern der Nähe* (the nearing of the near) which occasions the fourfold is impossible in space, it needs a place. It needs a here/there in order to occur. Technology makes all places homogenous and therefore eliminates the occasioning of place.

12 Heidegger, "The Thing," 164.

13 Heidegger, "The Thing," 168.

14 Heidegger, "The Thing," 166.

15 David R. Cerbone, *Heidegger: A Guide for the Perplexed* (London: Continuum, 2008), 135.

only able to recognize the jug in one particular way. It is incapable of "seeing" any thing except through the lens of its own framework. Heidegger laments that as technology gains prominence we are slowly losing our ability to encounter the world without the aid of a scientific analytic framework.

Heidegger is not arguing that our convictions and understandings should all revert to a pre-modern state. The word technology has a wide semantic range and could be understood as anything from simple tools to the atom bomb. The technology that Heidegger is primarily concerned with is *modern* technology. What makes modern technology distinctive is its character of "challenging forth."[16] Whereas pre-modern technologies brought forth distinctive things that have the marks of their particular production, modern technologies view things "exclusively in terms of their *effective use*: what something is is a matter of what it can best be used for, where 'best' means most effectively or efficiently."[17] Heidegger uses the example of a hydroelectric plant that has been built on the Rhine River. This plant mines the river, so to speak, for energy. The Rhine is no longer encountered as a river; its essence has been changed by the addition of the power plant. As a result of modern technology, everything has become a resource. Even those things sought for our own "good" become resources mined for their "goods." Education becomes a way to get a job, vacation becomes a way to "re-charge" our batteries, and relationships are pursued to fulfill our own individual desires.

Furthermore, Heidegger is not finished with his critique of modern technology. He writes, "We now name that challenging claim which gathers man thither to order the self-revealing as standing-reserve: '*Ge-stell.*'"[18] Heidegger understands *Ge-stell* as the modern attitude that there is a normative and cohesive framework that organizes all resources so that they might be gathered and used. Technology requires that resources be

16 Martin Heidegger, "The Question Concerning Technology," in *The Question Concerning Technology and Other Essays*, trans. William Lovitt (New York: Harper and Row, 1977), 16.

17 Cerbone, *Heidegger*, 141.

18 Heidegger, "Question," 19. This relatively common German word is called upon to do some extraordinary work in Heidegger's thinking. *Ge-stell* has various definitions ranging from apparatus to skeleton. Heidegger himself notes that his use of the word is uncommon ("eerie" even) but thinks that it captures the idea of both revealing and challenging that is so important to his critique of technology. Heidegger's idiosyncratic use of the word is subsequently translated into English as "enframing."

ordered efficiently so that it might become more effective in gathering resources. It is a never-ending cycle where efficiency becomes the end, spinning ever outward and pulling in all of our worlds. *Ge-stell* is the essence of technology in that it is not necessarily a technological device but a mode of revealing that allows beings to appear solely as resources. Malpas writes, "The Framework [*Ge-stell*] thus refers to a mode that allows the world and the beings within it to appear only insofar as they are available to an all encompassing ordering, calculating, and controlling."[19] Moreover, the effects of technology do not pertain only to natural materials but also to human beings. Heidegger worries that as technology continues to swallow up worlds, human beings will inevitably become a resource as well. Heidegger even points to the presence of a "human resources" sector as evidence of humans being assimilated into *Ge-stell.* This cuts to the heart of Heidegger's anxiety about technology. Heidegger writes, "The coming to presence of technology threatens revealing, threatens it with the possibility that all revealing will be consumed in ordering and that everything will present itself only in the unconcealedness of standing-reserve."[20]

The technological worldview, as Heidegger sees it, creates homogeneous places where value is distributed according to viable resources. There is no differentiation between the sacred and profane and no "other" that stands in contrast to the pervading technological mindset. As Malpas puts it, "there is an ever onward press of the expansion of knowledge and capacity that recognizes no limits to its knowledge and capacity as such."[21] Any view that would dare oppose the free reign of technology is dismissed as irrational because technology regards itself as *the* reasonable and neutral force that is necessary for productive activity. Technology is unable to consider questions that have been framed outside the bounds of its own revealing. In other words, technology lacks the necessary questionability to engage the question of being. Technology is blind to its own limits and does not allow for the proper questionability which would allow it to envisage its ordering as an ordering. As a result of this blindness, technology speeds ahead toward a more efficient ordering, all the while displacing

19 Malpas, *Heidegger's Topology*, 281.

20 Heidegger, "Questions," 33.

21 Malpas, *Heidegger's Topology*, 290.

human beings and disrupting their sense of place. As Heidegger notes, technology gives rise to uniform distancelessness and subsequently disrupts our dwelling, which leads to humans not residing "sufficiently as yet where in reality we already are."[22] As Malpas puts it, "This lies at the very heart of the problematic character of technology—not only does it cover over what it itself is, but it also displaces us from the place we nevertheless cannot leave."[23]

The natural question that follows Heidegger's account of technology is how we as human beings return to our proper heterogeneous place. Heidegger answers this question in his essay, "The Turning," writing, "Unless man first establishes himself beforehand in the space proper to his essence and there takes up his dwelling he will not be capable of anything essential with the destining now holding sway."[24] This brief answer needs some explaining.

Central to Heidegger's later work is the relationship between what Heidegger names "the fourfold" and "dwelling." For Heidegger, dwelling is directly related to the fourfold in that when we dwell we develop practices and make decisions based upon the earth, sky, divinities, and the mortals. The fourfold is Heidegger's way of describing the harmonious facets of the locale in which we operate that are constantly bearing on our being. We seek to live harmoniously within our own peculiar fourfold by developing practices that are peculiarly suited to our fourfold. Heidegger writes, "Dwelling preserves the fourfold by bringing presencing of the fourfold into things. But things themselves secure the fourfold *only when* they themselves *as* things are let be in their presencing."[25] Mark Wrathall explains,

> Heidegger believes that, as we learn to live in harmony with our particular world (our earth, our sky, our mortality and our divinities) we can be pulled out of a technologically frenzied existence into a world repopulated by things and activities that really matter to us, a world

22 Heidegger, as quoted in Jeff Malpas, *Heidegger's Topology*, 299.

23 Malpas, *Heidegger's Topology*, 299.

24 Heidegger, "The Turning," 39–40.

25 Martin Heidegger, "Building, Dwelling, Thinking," in *Poetry, Language, and Thought* (New York: Harper Perennial Classics, 1971), 149.

> where we are not ourselves merely resources to be maximized along with everyone else.[26]

Moreover, to dwell, according to Heidegger, is to find a way of living that is particularly suited for the location by developing practices that are especially attuned to the world with its own special earth, sky, mortal practices, and divinities. It should be noted that Heidegger understands the fourfold literally. The surrounding local world with its terrain, its seasons, its inhabitants, and its holiness are in harmony when they are integrated into the day-to-day life of each being. Heidegger believes that when this fourfold is lived out in our practice, our lives will retain an importance that exceeds that of resources because they will have been chosen according to our specific place. Or as Wrathall concludes, "We will finally be at home in our places, because our practices will be oriented to our local world alone."[27]

When speaking about the harmony of the fourfold, Heidegger cites Hölderlin, who asserts that humans dwell "poetically." Heidegger spends an entire essay exegeting Hölderlin's poem and argues that to dwell poetically means to dwell in proper measure. Malpas explains that measure for Heidegger does not mean that which is calculable; rather, human beings dwell "in relation to that which determines human being."[28] In order to preserve the harmony of the fourfold, one must dwell. Heidegger writes, "In saving the earth, in receiving the sky, in awaiting the divinities, in initiating the mortals, dwelling occurs as the fourfold preservation of the fourfold. To spare and preserve means: to take under our care, to look after the fourfold in its presencing."[29] Still one cannot dwell properly without first being affected by the presence of the fourfold. This circle is much like the circle of situatedness and questionability noted above. To preserve the fourfold means to allow it to both disclose the surrounding world and simultaneously conceal the world by exposing its finitude and boundedness. Dwelling facilitates the circular movement of opening and closing that is inherent in being. Dwelling situates the human being as

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26 Mark Wrathall, *How to Read Heidegger*, 110.

27 Wrathall, *How to Read Heidegger*, 115.

28 Malpas, *Heidegger's Topology*, 276.

29 Heidegger, "Building, Dwelling, Thinking," 149.

properly there and therefore enables the being to question its being in the world. This point is vital when thinking about Heidegger's view of place. In order to properly dwell in a place, we must be able to retain our own questionability. Unfortunately, the rising tide of technology has sought to displace humans by making their questionability obsolete. Yet Heidegger seeks to retain our questionability by connecting it to our dwelling place in the world.

But what exactly about this movement of revealing and concealing is poetic? Heidegger's arguments about the place of human beings are an attempt to lead us back to our home, a home that we never actually left. Our being out of place is the consequence of not grasping that we are already in place; it is "a failure to grasp the very place of being, and so to grasp the place of our own being."[30] Heidegger is trying to say that even while we are homeless, we are already home. This home is not necessarily a specific location, like Heidegger's Black Forest or Garrison Keillor's Lake Woebegone, though our home is always tied to the peculiar fourfold of a particular region. Rather, home is actually a *nearness* of being. This nearness is not tied to an actual physical location but is instead the recognition that being is always situated. This recognition is impossible without the physical places in which we find ourselves. Moreover, when we return home we are able to allow things to be as they are, in their concealment and openness, in their unity and their individuality. This homecoming, notes Heidegger, can only be expressed poetically.[31]

For Heidegger, the poetic is that which names "things." That is, poetry calls things in their particularity by way of the particularity of poetic language. Poetry is a unique form of communication in that it demands an exactitude and regimentation not found in any other type of language. The poet chooses a word intentionally with knowledge of its semantic range and places it next to another word to form a relationship. It is impossible to substitute synonymous words wantonly without eviscerating the poem.

30 Malpas, *Heidegger's Topology*, 277.

31 Indeed, there is some question as to whether what Heidegger is doing in his later work can actually be classified as philosophy. Heidegger seems to regard his later work as a type of meditative thinking or mystical journey. At the very core of Heidegger's later thought is its "poetic" character. Heidegger has abandoned the typical philosophical grammar and language (in part because it had been too influenced by science and technology) in favor of a poetic mode of language that better communicated his thinking.

Heidegger's conception of the poetic intends to reshape our understanding of language by resisting the tendency to break up language into form and content. In his lectures entitled, "What Is Called Thinking," Heidegger makes an important distinction that exposes the heart of his work on language. He writes,

> To speak language is totally different from employing language. Common speech merely employs language. This relation to language is just what constitutes its commonness. But because thought and, in a different way poesy, do not employ terms but speak words, therefore we are compelled, as soon as we set out upon a way of thought, to give specific attention to what the word says.[32]

Heidegger sees a distinct difference between a *word* and a *term*. He argues that terms are "like buckets or kegs out of which we can scoop sense."[33] Words, on the other hand, are not buckets or vessels. They are "wellsprings that are found and dug up in the telling, wellsprings that must be found and dug up again and again . . . . If we do not go to the spring again and again, the buckets and kegs stay empty, or their content stays stale."[34] Words have a particularity that resists the technological homogenization that seeks to find a single static meaning. Moreover, the particularity of language aids in recognizing the particularity of the "thing." Heidegger writes that "the word makes the thing into a thing—it 'bethings' the thing."[35] Heidegger's use of a semi-poetic language is designed to redeem the loss of things in our lives by fostering reverence for the forms of language that contribute to this redemption. For Heidegger, the word is not a symbol that is designed to evoke a picture in our mind. He rejects this symbolic explanation of language and demands that we take seriously the idea that poetic language encounters and describes things as they really are and is capable of gathering the fourfold. Words are not a symbolic representation of a thing, nor are they new additions to the way things are. Poetic language is the recognition that the "semipoetic" descriptions that

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32 Martin Heidegger, *What Is Called Thinking*, trans. Fred D. Wieck and J. Glenn Gray (New York: Harper and Row, 1968), 128.

33 Heidegger, *What Is Called Thinking*, 128.

34 Heidegger, *What Is Called Thinking*, 129.

35 Martin Heidegger, "Words," in *On the Way to Language*, trans. Peter D. Hertz (New York: Harper, 1971), 151.

we use are rooted in our situatedness and form the genuine features of reality, shaping our lives so that the world that we occupy genuinely matters. Poetry works through our place. In the case of Heidegger, it should come as no surprise that the poetics of his thinking and writing are directly influenced by his world. His poetics are shaped by his philosophical tradition, his national heritage, and the South German landscape were he grew up, lived, and died. We speak poetically from our place, and any poetry that we create reflects the particularity of our being that finds itself situated between the earth and sky, mortals and divinities.

As mentioned above, Heidegger's thought is wily and intentionally evades any linear progression. In the first part of this paper, I have tried to follow and describe one particular twisting path of Heidegger's thinking: place. This path intersected with technology, the fourfold, dwelling, and poetry. As we now turn to the light that this path might shine upon the discipline of homiletics, a word of disclosure is in order. Heidegger's philosophy works diligently to describe the ontological characteristics of being while avoiding metaphysical and ontic descriptions of human behavior. It is not that Heidegger doesn't believe that the ontic exists or that it is unimportant. It is just not part of his project. Further, to speak about the consequences of Heidegger's thought on a particular practice such as preaching requires thinking outside the ontological boundaries which Heidegger has worked so hard to erect. I will leave the question of what methodology best facilitates a conversation between Heidegger and other disciplines unanswered for now and rely upon Ott's advice to foster a philosophical eclecticism that notices those places in the homiletical discipline that are illumined by the work of Martin Heidegger.

PREACHING FROM OUR PLACES

The task of preaching has not been immune to the problems of technology in our contemporary age. Just as Heidegger's Rhine River is revealed by the presence of modern technology as only a power source, so too is the Christian faith being revealed only as a resource to be cultivated. Ministry is being commodified and the Church is beginning to look more like a

department store than a place of worship. I heard an anecdote recently of a pastor who is interrupted every night at dinner by some boys from his youth group who want to "hang out." When explaining why he interrupts an opportunity to spend time with his family to be with these students, the pastor said, "You know, that's ministry." Ministry is slowly losing its collaborative character and becoming another resource to be mined. Moreover, the places in our lives are becoming homogenous: the church looks like a coffee shop, which looks like my living room. The physical locations we occupy are mirroring the organizations of our world. Subsequently, we are losing any distinction between the sacred and profane, the divine and the mortal. We are losing the particular, "the other" that centers us within our particular place. And in their preaching, pastors are aiding this loss. The bible is no longer experienced as a sacred witness; it is a resource, mined for existential advice, plot points, or historical-critical details. The preacher mines the congregation for praise without worrying if her words are faithful. The pastor's study is now an office. The table is no longer the meeting place of God, human, earth, and sky; rather it is an opportunity to "get right with God." In short, the technological mindset is displacing the Church from its place in the world. In an attempt to reverse this process and return the Church to its proper location in the world, we must learn to preach from our place.

For the past thirty years many homileticians have placed an emphasis on "space" or "room." The idea is that space—be it emotional, spiritual, imaginative, or cognitive—between the preacher and her message and the congregation is necessary in order for the congregation to question and believe freely.[36] Consequently, much has been written on how to create homiletical space. What is absent in these accounts of space is any notion of *place*. This distinction is key. Space is a neutral term that harkens back to a Cartesian worldview wherein matter is defined as *res extensa*, the extending thing. Further, space itself is homogeneous; there is no location in space. It is only when space has boundaries that space begins being. As Heidegger writes,

36 A crude description, I know. It is not my intention to disparage the work that has been done on space. I only want to point out the intrinsic connection that space has with place.

> A space is something that has been made room for, something that has been cleared and free, namely with a boundary, Greek *peras*. A boundary is not that at which something stops but, as the Greeks recognized, the boundary is that from which something begins its presencing. . . . Accordingly, spaces receive their being from locations and not from "space."[37]

What is missing in the homiletical accounts of space is a discussion of the surrounding places that allow for the opening up of space. In order to create space we must first acknowledge the places or worlds in which we are situated. Place and space are intrinsically tied to each other in such a way that to discuss one without the other is to misunderstand the nature of both. Place opens into space, which is delineated by another place, which in turn opens into space.

In order to open space between the preacher and the congregation we must first recognize the situatedness of our being in a distinct place. We must realize where we dwell. This dwelling does not solely mean our physical location, though it does incorporate location. Our dwelling is constituted by the opening and closing of the fourfold. Preaching from our places requires recognizing and living in the harmony of the fourfold that constitutes a particular world while also closing off other worlds. This unique opening and closing defines the particularity of the congregation, text, and occasion. In short, preaching from a particular place recognizes the unique dynamic landscape in which the congregation dwells and seeks to preach a message tailored to that landscape.

In her 2004 dissertation, "Preaching God Visible: Geo-Rhetoric and the Theological Appropriation of Landscape Imagery in the Sermons of Jonathan Edwards," Kristin Saldine argues that using landscape images familiar to the congregation is a means of making the Gospel visible to the listener. Landscape, defined as "the shaped place of human habitation,"[38] where "nature and culture meet in time and space,"[39] has rhetorical dimensions as both the context into which the sermon is delivered and as the familiar images that serve the suasory discourse. Saldine's geo-rhetoric

37 Heidegger, "Building, Dwelling, Thinking," 152.

38 Kristin Saldine, "Preaching God Visible: Geo-Rhetoric and the Theological Appropriation of Landscape Imagery in the Sermons of Jonathan Edwards" (PhD diss., Princeton Theological Seminary, 2004), 3.

39 Saldine, "Preaching God Visible," 7.

takes seriously the role of place in the preaching act because it recognizes the role of specific locales in shaping the way the congregation hears the sermon. Saldine writes, "The rhetorical power of landscape lies in its ability to interpret and communicate the common and particular reality of lived experience in its full contextual dimensions."[40] It is therefore important, argues Saldine, that preachers become geographically aware in order to read the complex interaction of social setting and geography. "Through geographical awareness and attention to landscape," she writes, "preachers can gain a fuller sense of a congregation's context in order to preach a more fitting sermon."[41] Moreover, the preaching that results from this geographical vantage will use figurative language that is theologically appropriate to the context. While Saldine's metaphysical language and the ontological goals of her geo-rhetorical homiletic would no doubt rankle Heidegger (after all, besides poetry, what did not?), they do share a similar conviction that landscape must be taken into account when assessing the ontological make-up of a particular group. Where Heidegger differs from Saldine is in his assertion that the fourfold cannot and must not be empirically assessed, but lived in order to be shared.

The preacher must learn to live in the harmony of the fourfold before she can speak to the particular place of the congregation. For instance, I may be able to read about the historical, socio-economic, geographical, and cultural intricacies of the Appalachian mountain region in preparation to preach to an Appalachian community. I might even learn the idiosyncrasies of their regional dialect as a suasory device. Yet, I will not be able to communicate the intricacies of the lived experience of the region as adeptly as a person whose identity has been shaped by the surrounding landscape. I must live among the confluence of the fourfold of the Appalachian region in order to relate the Gospel most effectively to the lives of its inhabitants. The complex relationship of the earth, sky, mortals, and divinities is learned through the quotidian living in a particular place. It is encountered through conversations with the locals, by preparing for the coming season, and by experiencing the way that sacred and holy uniquely

40 Saldine, "Preaching God Visible," 16.

41 Saldine, "Preaching God Visible," 264.

manifest themselves in that place. It is when the region becomes home that we are ready to speak from our place.

Yet, how do we communicate the gospel from our particular place? We do so in the same way that Heidegger sought to lead people to a realization of their place: poetically. By preaching poetically we recognize that the words that we use have a distinct particularity that resists paraphrase or substitution. Our poetic words recognize and attest to the situatedness of our lives. They speak to the place we occupy and reflect the particularity of that place. The tenor and scope of the poetic language that the preacher uses is directly connected to the perception and influence of the surrounding congregational landscape. For instance, the description of God as one who is vast as an ocean will hold a wildly different significance to a Pacific islander than to an Arab Bedouin. Moreover, we cannot substitute the ocean image when speaking to a Bedouin—saying instead, "God is vast as a desert"—and expect the same idea to be communicated. No easy poetic translation can effectively communicate poetic ideas across dwelling places. Thus, each sermon must be controlled by the place of the preacher and the congregation. Poetic words are not symbolic representations of an actual world, but are born out of and constitute the situated reality of the preacher and the congregation.

Preaching poetically does not mean that the preacher recites a poem from the pulpit. Rather, it means that the preacher dons a regional poetic "accent" that is able to communicate the gospel via imagery and metaphor unique to the fourfold of the particular congregation. Heidegger himself was drawn to the poetry of Hebel, Trackel, and Hölderlin precisely because they poetically expressed his experience as a resident of the Black Forest. The poetic accent of the preacher communicates the intricacies of the surrounding region while still retaining a distinct voice. The accent is conspicuous in its poetic otherness yet familiar in its imagery. Moreover, the accent creates the distance necessary for understanding while still employing imagery and metaphor that speaks to the particular experience of the congregation's shared fourfold that roots them in their home.

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In the summer of 1966, Heidegger gave the festival address at the village of Todtnauberg, the mountain town where he had long owned a small ski chalet. Most of Heidegger's works were written in this small hut and it served as a sanctuary from his life in Freiburg. In this address Heidegger adopts a thankful tone for the way that the Todtnauberg residents had accepted him as one of their own. He admits that it is not easy to adopt outsiders and their contrary practices, and he compliments the residents for their hospitality. Then, in an amazing turn, Heidegger exhorts his mountain community to accept those people who are being alienated by a world drunk on technological progress. He pleads with the mountain town to prepare a place for these refugees "where they can suddenly hear silence, where they can find rest in this silence, where they can experience what is a forest and an alpine meadow, what is a rocky slope and a lively flowing creek . . . to dwell in such a landscape where humans still speak the strange expressive mother tongue."[42] For Heidegger, the familiar call of the surrounding landscape is capable of guiding people out of their alienation back to the home that they have longed for. Preachers would be wise to heed this advice. Abstract language and foreign metaphors only confuse the congregation and further alienate them from their home. In order to reverse the technological momentum of current preaching, preachers must be baptized into the local congregation's landscape, adopt the poetic accent of the region, speak the gospel to alienated congregations, and guide them back to their home so that they might finally take root and find rest.

42 Martin Heidegger as quoted in Robert Mugerauer, *Heidegger and Homecoming: The Leitmotif in the Later Writings* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2008), 536.

The British Missionary Enterprise since 1700. By Jeffrey Cox. Christianity and Society in the Modern World. Series ed. Hugh McLeod. New York: Routledge, 2008, 315 pages.

The past ten years have witnessed a wealth of quality scholarship on aspects of British missions, missionaries, and their encounters with other peoples around the globe. Additionally, given the historiographical focus upon indigenous agency and appropriation in the global spread of Christianity in current scholarship, an overview of western missionaries may not appear *au courant*. Even in light of these significant challenges, Cox's remarkable work stands out as a solid contribution to contemporary studies of the British Empire, the history of Christian missions and the development of world Christianity.

Cox, who currently teaches at the University of Iowa and has published previously on Christianity in India, argues for the necessity of a new overview of British missions. His work addresses a variety of new historiographies which stem from the post-colonial scholar, Edward Said. Cox incorporates these historiographical approaches within the basic two-fold narrative of his book: the rise and fall of the British Empire and the rise and fall of British missions (3). Cox's project is comprehensive in its scope, sympathetic in its tone, and fair-minded in its presentation.

The book is filled with adjectives that convey Cox's balance with regard to the relationship between British missionaries and the British Empire: "complicated," "unpredictable" and "ambiguous" are frequent descriptors. At the same time, Cox finds that missionaries were deeply implicated in the British imperial project. The story, for Cox, is one of consistent tension between the Empire of Britain and the Empire of Christ, the two never being conflated. He goes to considerable lengths to illuminate in what circumstances and why missionaries sought certain relationships to the British Empire. Here Cox accomplishes an admirable task of balancing the intentions and understandings of missionaries themselves with critiques of their actions and beliefs proffered by many scholars in recent decades.

For Cox, the story is ultimately one of "unintended consequences." The prime example of this is the tremendous growth of Christianity in parts of Africa, Asia, and Latin American in the second half of the twentieth cen-

tury. Cox, therefore, takes the story of British missions to the 1990s and seeks to temper what he believes is a new evangelical triumphalism in such growth in former (and current) mission "fields." Cox also includes discussions of the church growth movement and addresses the work of contemporary scholars of world Christianity such as Lamin Sanneh. No other full historical survey of British missions provides such an up-to-date coverage of the missionary enterprise and its contemporary ramifications.

This book's point of departure (ca. 1700) also illustrates a noteworthy feature; that is, the continuous inclusion of high-church Anglican missions in the story of the British missionary enterprise. Cox also attempts to give continuous mention of the prominent, undeniable and essential roles of British women and the many "native helpers" who have, until recently, received scarce historical notice or credit. At the same time, however, many of his examples remain men and the key missiological thinkers and missionary society personnel which he highlights are predominately men. While women receive recurring recognition and credit, they often remain rather nondescript throughout the book.

A book on this topic cannot help but be compared to the many other recent publications in the field. Cox's work most closely resembles Andrew Porter's *Religion Versus Empire?* (2004). Porter's book was written in response to publications by Catherine Hall (*Civilising Subjects,* 2002) and Susan Thorne (*Congregational Missions and the Making of an Imperial Culture,* 1999), both of whom deeply implicated missionaries in the British imperial project. Porter, by contrast, argues that the relation between British imperialism and British missions was never conflated, as the two were consistently interested in pursuing different goals with different means. Cox follows Porter's lead, though Cox's concerns are broader than merely parsing out the relationship between missions and empire. Additionally, Cox's work is markedly more comprehensive and expansive in scope than are Thorne's or Hall's erudite studies. Cox, therefore, is able to draw upon a deeper range of comparative material that was not within the purview of Thorne or Hall.

Much of Cox's aim is to provide an overview of the missionary enterprise that balances missionary critiques with missionary triumphalism. The book condenses and presents a tremendous amount of contemporary and historical material. His tone and writing are lucid, accessible and interesting throughout. While the work features a comprehensive and up-to-date bibliography, the book's sparse endnotes are a minor irritation. The appendix has a series of graphs and charts that are both interesting and pedagogically useful in a course on the subject. The book's price ($150 hardcover, $59.95 paperback) will likely preclude it from gaining widespread use as a textbook, but its subsections could serve as supplementary reading on a specific topic. The book, as a whole, might not provide a tremendous amount of new material to the specialist, but Cox's interesting examples, sympathetic tone, and thorough scholarship have set the bar quite high for future works on the subject.

JASON BRUNER
PRINCETON THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

The Practice of Piety: The Theology of the Midwestern Reformed Church in America, 1866–1966. By Eugene P. Heideman. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2009, 274 pages.

Eugene P. Heideman has worn many hats over the course of his long and distinguished career. Graduating from Western Theological Seminary in 1954 and then from the University of Utrecht with a doctorate in theology in 1959, he spent the next ten years as a missionary in India. Upon his return to the States, he became a professor at Western Seminary and then served as Secretary of the General Program Council of the Reformed Church in America (RCA) until retiring in 1994. He also authored several books along the way, including *Reform Bishops and Catholic Elders* (1970) on ecumenical issues and *From Mission to Church* (2001) on the RCA's mission activities in India. In his latest work, *The Practice of Piety*, Heideman looks at the theological culture of the RCA's Midwestern

churches. In doing so, he provides one of the most significant studies of any aspect of the RCA to date.

The RCA is one of the oldest ethnic-confessional denominations in America. It initially established its presence in Dutch-controlled Manhattan in 1628. Later, under British rule, it was officially recognized by the crown in 1696 as an ethnically-Dutch denomination. By the nineteenth century, its members could be found throughout New England and parts of Canada. Beginning in the 1840s, however, a large wave of Dutch immigrants entered America and settled principally in the mid-western territories. These immigrants were influenced by the European pietist movement and upon their arrival established a religious culture shaped by the efforts to guard their traditional beliefs and communities as well as accommodate them to their new American setting. The central theme of the current work lies in the tension between the ethnic loyalties as well as the traditional theological commitments of the Midwestern congregations of the RCA and the realities of living in America's religiously pluralistic society.

Heideman explores this tension by focusing on what he believes is the distinct 'piety' of the Midwestern RCA. By 'piety,' he means the elements of religious life that lead to righteous living according to what one perceives to be God's commands. This Midwestern piety was more conservative in its reading of the major Reformed confessions, more introverted, and more ethnically exclusivist than the religion practiced by the RCA in the Northeast and Canada. The temporal limits of the study, 1866–1966, are fluid, and he frequently references individuals and documents before and after this period. These one hundred years saw the publication of a wealth of periodicals and books by ministers and theologians in the Midwest from which Heideman draws his source material. Many of these individuals were associated in some way with Western Theological Seminary and Hope College. Especially the religious periodicals *De Hope*, the *Leader*, and the *Christian Herald* are sources of documentation. Looking at these sources and others, Heideman uncovers the names and work of the numerous figures, mostly ministers, who wrote about various aspects of denominational life and attempted to guide their readers to pious living in a changing America. Heideman tells the story of the religious life of the Midwestern RCA almost exclusively from these ministers' perspective.

Heideman divides the book into seven chapters and essentially into two parts. The first six discuss specific themes developed before World War II. Heideman argues convincingly the religious practices and attitudes of the Midwestern RCA were most distinct in this period. He discusses changes in worship practices and church order. Biblical authority receives a chapter as well as the Midwestern conception of salvation and of Christian community. The chapter on biblical authority was particularly impressive. Heideman swiftly, but sufficiently, discusses the complex development of liberal interpretations of scripture and the equally complicated conservative responses, of which the Midwesterner were a part. Here he points particularly to the work of Albertus Pieters, professor of Bible at Western as a major figure in this debate. Yet, liberalism was not the only issues the author identified in the period. Interestingly, he also noted how Midwestern writers such as Pieters perceived the growth of dispensationalism as a threat to biblical authority in this period, mainly its rejection of traditional covenantal theology. The final chapter, "New Perspectives on the Old Faith" discusses the widespread changes that took place in the Midwestern RCA after World War II. In many ways this is signified by the widespread faculty turnover at Western in the 1940s. This new generation of leaders, such as Eugene Osterhaven and Lester Kuyper, sought to overcome what they believed as defensive traditionalism and narrow pietism at the seminary and the Midwestern church at large. Part of this involved overcoming ethnic exclusivity and participating in broader ecumenical efforts to evangelize.

The Practice of Piety is highly accessible and would be a benefit for student, scholar, and the general public alike. Heideman writes about his subjects with the clarity and explanatory power that only a person who has spent his or her life teaching and thinking about those subjects typically possesses. The numerous individuals he highlights in his story, many of whom have been largely forgotten by history, are one of the great assets of the book. However, the limitations he places on himself are at times disappointing. This is not a history of the entire Reformed Church in America, but on the Midwestern church and its perspective. At times he brings better-known figures such as Charles Hodge and B. B. Warfield into the conversation, and one wishes he had included more of such interactions

for a more comprehensive story. Likewise, the book is devoted entirely to the leadership of the church, and it would have been interesting to include some lay views on the "practice of piety." Nevertheless, Heideman's work is a welcome edition on a denomination often overlooked by historians and hopefully will encourage more efforts on this subject in the near future.

DAVED ANTHONY SCHMIDT
PRINCETON THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

The Judaizing Calvin: Sixteenth-Century Debates over the Messianic Psalms. By G. Sujin Pak. Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2010, 216 pages

G. Sujin Pak analyzes Calvin's exegesis in light of the claims of some sixteenth-century historians who portray Calvin in line with precritical exegetes, and those of some modern theologians and biblical scholars who argue that Calvin was an unprecedented initiator of modern historical criticism. For Pak, Calvin's exegesis cannot be easily accommodated either to precritical Christian interpretations or to modern presuppositions and practices. In this book, Pak nicely demonstrates why Calvin's exegesis was both traditional and innovative by examining Calvin's interpretation of eight messianic Psalms (Psalms 2, 8, 16, 22, 45, 72, 110, and 118) in its sixteenth-century context. She carefully compares Calvin's interpretation to earlier ones such as the commentaries of the Glossa Ordinaria, Denis the Carthusian, Nicholas of Lyra, and Jacques Lefèvre d'Étaples, as well as with the exegeses of significant Protestant reformers such as Martin Luther and Martin Bucer. Thus, by reading Calvin's exegesis of the eight messianic Psalms within the company of Calvin's own exegetical ancestors, contemporaries, and successors, Pak successfully demonstrates that Calvin introduces an important shift in the history of biblical exegesis.

There are at least three factors that make Pak's work very informative and illuminating. First, Pak's discussion of Calvin's exegetical shift is focused on the diverse understandings of the literal sense of scripture in the history of exegesis. Rather than merely comparing Calvin's exegesis to preceding, contemporary, and successive treatments of the messianic Psalms side by side, Pak centers her discussion on debates over the

changing views of the literal sense and succinctly articulates the extent to which Calvin's view of these Psalms was unprecedented. Pak's focused comparison and contrast of Calvin's exegesis with late-medieval and Protestant interpretations clearly reveals that Calvin's exegetical continuity and divergence resulted from his distinctive view of the literal sense of the Psalms. With her well ordered treatment of each generation's exegetical strategies and principles centered on the discussion of the literal meaning, Pak argues convincingly that Calvin identified the Psalms' literal meaning in reference to the human authorial intention in the life and experiences of David, instead of reading the Psalms as exclusively referring to Christ.

Second, Pak insightfully connects her discussion of Calvin's exegesis to the role of biblical interpretation in the development of Protestant confessional identities. Pak introduces Bucer's typological reading as a mediating point between Luther's exegesis, which was more traditional in the sense that Luther followed the antecedent christological readings of the Psalms, and Calvin's exegesis, which read them in the historical context of David and interpreted them in light of the Church's experiences. By explaining their diverse exegetical principles, strategies, and theological propositions, Pak convincingly articulates how each Protestant reformer used his exegesis to teach and promote essential Protestant doctrines and understandings of piety and worship. Also, Pak's discussion of the debate between a Lutheran theologian Aegidius Hunnius and a Reformed theologian David Pareus provides a great example of how each Protestant group attempted to defend its Christian orthodoxy as well as accuse others of being in error by means of biblical exegesis. Consequently, by portraying each Protestant group's exegesis of the messianic Psalms as a miniature form of Protestant confessional identity, Pak reminds readers that in addition to the economic, religious and socio-political elements in the sixteenth-century, the role of biblical interpretation should be seriously considered in the discussion of the formation of Protestant confessional identities.

Thirdly, Calvin's exegesis, as analyzed by Pak, is a positive model in the history of interpretation concerning Christian-Jewish relations. Pak not only points out the antecedent christological and trinitarian readings of the messianic Psalms prior to Calvin, but also emphasizes their overall anti-Jewish bias and negative regard for Jewish exegesis. Particularly, Pak

expounds Luther's exegetical strategy of "Jews-as-Enemies" in the Psalms and articulates how previous Christian traditions employed a negative view of the Jews in scripture in order to attack contemporary theological opponents. Contrarily, Pak illuminates Calvin's positive use of Jewish exegesis, which is informative for understanding the historical context of David and the authorial intention of the Psalms. Thus, Pak suggests that Calvin's exegesis is one model of how to read scripture in a truly Christian way that avoids unnecessary anti-Jewish tendencies entailed in most of precritical exegesis.

Pak's work, though it mainly focuses on Calvin's exegesis, deals with many important theological issues, such as the diverse views of the literal sense of scripture in the history of interpretation, the role of biblical exegesis in the development of Protestant confessional identities, Calvin's contribution to constructive Christian-Jewish relations and Calvin's position with regard to precritical and modern exegesis. Due to the various subjects discussed in a single volume, Pak seems not to include some details related to each issue that might have been helpful to clarify her points. Although she briefly mentions it in her conclusion, for example, Pak does not explicitly explain the diverse perceptions of "history" itself in late medieval and Protestant readings, which crucially impacted their definitions of the literal sense of scripture. Also, while Pak rightly points out Luther's anti-Jewish tendencies for the purpose of highlighting the characteristics of precritical exegesis, she does not mention the similarities between Luther and Calvin in their positive understanding of the primacy of Israel's covenant in the history of salvation. Finally, Pak's emphasis on Calvin's positive view of the Jews needs to be balanced by Calvin's understanding of the relationship between the Old and New Testament and his different attitude toward biblical Jews and contemporary Jews. Yet Pak's work addresses very intriguing questions concerning Calvin's position in the history of biblical interpretation and confirms that not only Calvin's theology but also his exegetical principles and strategies cannot be easily accommodated to any theological and hermeneutical side.

Finally, Pak's work definitely contributes to the ongoing discussion regarding the role of biblical exegesis in the formation of Protes-

tant confessional identities in the sixteenth century as well as suitable christological readings of the Old Testament.

INSEO SONG
PRINCETON THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

Faith in the Fight: Religion and the American Soldier in the Great War. By Jonathan Ebel. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2010, 253 pages.

Most historians who have studied American religion during the Great War have mined the writings of Protestant leaders in order to describe denominational or supra-denominational responses to the European conflict and its domestic consequences. In his important first book, Jonathan Ebel attempts to shift the historiographical focus onto the wartime experience of laypeople, sifting through diaries, memoirs, newspaper publications, poetry, and survey responses to illumine the religious dimensions of ordinary Americans' encounters with modern warfare. Ebel finds that, contrary to standard accounts of religious and political disillusionment, the Great War strengthened its American participants' pre-war faiths, even as it transformed these faiths into a novel and heightened religio-civil devotion.

Progressive Protestants by the first decade of the twentieth century faced a crisis. Their optimistic appraisal of the progress of the kingdom of God on earth appeared sharply at odds with the gritty reality of an increasingly urban and industrial America. The war, when it came, provided the antidote to this malaise as it harnessed and revitalized prewar religious virtues of manliness, sacrifice, and crusading optimism. Ebel traces this dynamic among individual soldiers and war workers. Far from abandoning their previous ideological commitments, Americans who encountered the chaotic horror of industrial warfare sought order and meaning in established religious tropes. These were often doctrinally non-specific, but nevertheless conveyed clear expectations of national and individual redemption through strenuous exertion and violence.

Despite the ability of religious traditions to provide meaning and metaphor for Americans in France, however, soldiers and war workers did

not emerge from the war with their faiths unchanged. Soldierly conceptions of the afterlife, for instance, tended to draw on existing domestic and progressive morphologies, but also developed emphases on masculine comradeship and communication between the living and the dead. Feelings of powerlessness engendered by war contributed to a heightened supernaturalism and, as one might expect, lent credence to fundamentalist critiques of liberal theology. Perhaps most significantly, the American Legion, founded in 1919, sought to perpetuate wartime ideals, forging an ecumenical faith that explicitly subordinated denominational particularities to the duties of citizenship; this creed would become a powerfully visible strain in twentieth-century political and cultural life.

Ebel's basic description of soldiers' and war workers' religious experience is laudable for its attention to individual voices and is compelling in its broader contours. His research has been deep enough to produce beautifully illustrative personal narratives, and broad enough to reveal nuances among his sources, from letters written to concerned parents at home, to the quasi-official, soldier-authored newspaper, *The Stars and Stripes*. One might wish that the author had treated more thoroughly the potential difficulties of some of these sources (for example, the performative aspects of letters home and issues of censorship in *The Stars and Stripes* are discussed only briefly), but to do so might have been a distraction from an argument that is commendable for its suggestiveness and clarity. The central premise of his research—that the brief bloom of intensely personal writing occasioned among ordinary people by the war can provide an invaluable portrait of lay religiosity—is shown certainly to be correct.

Another strength of the book is Ebel's close exegesis of his illustrative primary material, though his interpretation sometimes outruns his evidence. When it works, Ebel's line-by-line scrutiny of war writing draws out subtleties of meaning that might otherwise have been lost. His treatment of soldiers' poetry, for instance, is particularly good for its elucidation of the religious psychology of combat. Occasionally, Ebel makes more of a word or phrase than some readers will be inclined to allow. For example, in comparing African American soldiers' experiences with those of their white counterparts, he makes extensive use of terse responses to the Virginia War Survey, conducted among veterans between 1919 and 1921. Ebel

speculates at length about the meaning of black veteran Vernon Smith's assertion that the war made him "a better man," suggesting allusions to muscular Christianity, racial constructions of manhood, and progressive notions of civilization (118–19). But "a better man" is such a common colloquialism that, absent of a richer context than Ebel possesses, its precise meaning would seem difficult to discern. For that matter, Smith's answer might well have been a cynical dodge, meant to give bland assurance to a still-menacing Virginia state government. Though Ebel proposes interesting possibilities, his evidence remains opaque.

This is a small fault, however, in a well-executed, path-breaking study. As Ebel points out, the Great War has largely fallen out of modern memory; it has been overshadowed by the singular moral triumph of the Second World War. If historians wish to understand the inherent ambiguities of religion and warfare in the twentieth century, however, the Great War, which gave spectacularly violent introduction to the most violent decades in human history, is surely a rich resource. By attending closely to the experience of soldiers and war workers, Ebel enlarges our appreciation of the religious significance of the conflict. Perhaps more importantly, he helpfully reorients our vision to account for ordinary men and women's attempts to find ultimate meaning in the hell of modern industrial warfare.

AARON SIZER
PRINCETON THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

The Early Preaching of Karl Barth: Fourteen Sermons with Commentary. By Karl Barth and William H. Willimon. Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2009, 171 pages.

William H. Willimon, presiding bishop in the North Alabama Conference of the United Methodist Church and former Dean of the Chapel at Duke University, is well known and widely read in mainline Protestant circles. In a 1996 international survey by Baylor University, Willimon was named one of the twelve most effective preachers in the English-speaking world. In a 2005 survey by the Pew Research Center, he was listed after Henri

Nouwen as the second most widely read author by mainline Protestant pastors. When Willimon preaches or writes, he has a large audience.

In recent years, Willimon has devoted significant time and attention to studying Karl Barth's work from a homiletical perspective, first, in *Conversations with Barth on Preaching* (2006), and, more recently, in *The Early Preaching of Karl Barth* (2009). These published volumes are important, original contributions, especially in North America, where Barth's early sermons have only recently appeared and are as yet not translated. Thus, English-speaking pastors and scholars have not yet been exposed to them. And most homileticians are only familiar with *Deliverance to the Captives* (1961), his widely published collection of sermons preached to inmates in a Basel prison in the 1950s.

With the assistance of translator John E. Wilson, Willimon presents fourteen different sermons that Barth preached between 1917 and 1920 at Safenwil, a small Swiss village where he served as pastor from 1911 to 1921. Willimon does not exactly construct an argument for or against the sermons' content. Rather, his homiletical reflections on each sermon range from the devotional to the personal to the political. Throughout the book, he provides information to help the reader better understand the context from which Barth's thinking emerges.

At several points in Barth's sermons, the reader recognizes foreshadows of the systematic theologian. One can hear Wilhelm Hermann's influence on Barth's dialectical theology. For example, Barth describes the Day of the Lord as a time when "we hear both from God's mouth: both the 'Yes,' with which God gives us our right to be what we are, and the 'No,' with which God puts away our falseness, all that is wrong, and consumes it with fire" (31). Recognizable also is Barth's *theologia crucis*, emerging out of the context of World War I when, in a sermon delivered in 1920 he says, "There must be a crisis in *Christianity*, a crisis of life and death, as in a serious illness" (146).

Though the sermons are suggestive of Barth's later work, the real gift of this book is in the surprises it gives the reader, especially in light of his *Homiletics* (lectures: 1932–33) and the secondary sources about Barth's preaching. To say that this collection challenges misconceptions of Barth's homiletics is an understatement. First, although he seems to shun intro-

ductions and illustrations in *Homiletics* (1966), he uses both freely and frequently in his sermons. (If one thinks Barth stopped this practice after *Homiletics* was published, note that he breaks his own rules in *Deliverance to the Captives*, published decades later). Second, although he was accused of biblicism at different points in his career, some of his sermons are built around ideas that have little to do with the text before him, such as his sermon on Psalm 23 (89ff). Third, although it is well known that Eduard Thurneysen was a kindred spirit, a man whose imperative to preachers was, "No Eloquence!," the rhetorical flourishes by Barth are too numerous to count. He uses repetition, restatement, vivid imagery, imagination, and many other rhetorical devices. Finally, his awareness of his audience and of the contexts of Safenwil, World War I, and Swiss Socialism is evident throughout the sermons. Our twenty-first-century caricatures of Barth the preacher are challenged as Willimon presents a person we may not have expected to find.

The "comments" by Willimon that accompany each sermon are usually helpful. However, they could have been improved in two ways. First, the historical background information Willimon provides is insufficient. What should we know about the people of Safenwil? What was happening in Barth's congregation? What should we know about Swiss Socialism and its impact on Barth and his congregation? What was happening in the War around this or that date? The more background is available, the more the reader will understand the context shaping what Barth says and why he says it. Second, Willimon might have interrogated the text more thoroughly. Although Willimon disagrees with and challenges Barth on some points, he could go much further than he does. At times, his positive comments seem overstated, and he comes across as an admirer willing to look past the faults of the admired. Barth was a great preacher, but he also had his weaknesses. Willimon could have done more to discuss Barth's weaknesses as a counterbalance to his strengths.

Willimon makes an important contribution to the field, first, by publishing sermonic materials not previously available to the public, at least in English, and, secondly, by giving us a few surprise glimpses of Barth the preacher. These sermons challenge caricatures of Barth by taking the reader up close and personal, showing how and what Barth actually

preached. This book will be a helpful resource in the hands of the preacher who wants to read it devotionally or for professional enrichment, the homiletician who wishes to learn more about Barth's homiletical development, or the systematic theologian interested in a fascinating corpus of literature in early Barth studies.

JARED ALCÁNTARA
PRINCETON THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

A Peaceable Psychology: Christian Therapy in a World of Many Cultures. By Alvin Dueck and Kevin Reimer. Grand Rapids: Brazos, 2009, 288 pages.

What has Christian psychology to do with ethnic and religious tradition in a multicultural world? This is one of the questions *A Peaceable Psychology: Christian Therapy in a World of Many Culture* seeks to explore. Alvin Dueck, the Evelyn and Frank Freed Professor of the Integration of Psychology and Theology at Fuller Theological Seminary, and Kevin Reimer, Professor of Psychology at Azusa Pacific University, seek a culturally, ethnically, politically, and theologically sensitive psychology. This is what they call a "peaceable psychology." They argue that contemporary Christian psychology should be cognizant of diversity and difference in non-western clients, while maintaining the foundation of the concrete life and teachings of Jesus Christ.

Grounded in the Anabaptist tradition, Dueck and Reimer attempt to critically appropriate clients' diverse cultures and traditions, using the story of the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ as their point of departure. They insist that ethnic and religious indigeneity and differences among ethno-religious communities must be valued within the complicated situation of therapy in a multicultural context. The task they set for themselves is to "empower local mental-health practitioners to mine one's own traditions for gifts of healing" (14).

The authors' major emphasis is on three interrelated issues: healing, ethnicity/politics, and religion. Moving beyond Western-style psychological healing ruled by the scientific pattern, they discuss healing from the perspective of ethnic or religious clients and psychologists. In the context

of therapy, the authors consider religion and ethnicity important dialogue partners and encourage clients to raise their own religious and ethnic voices. They empower people to use their own native language because they believe that "healing is best conducted ethnically, in the client's mother tongue and in his or her local culture" (102). At the crossroads of religion, ethnicity, politics, and culture, they challenge the Christian psychologist to be aware of clients' cultural and political situations, as well as the role of his or her own Christian narrative in conducting therapy. The authors ground this approach in the doctrine of incarnation, describing "an encounter between two human beings who each live within stories of existential and transcendent significance" (13).

Dueck and Reimer argue that dominant Western psychology disregards and eliminates ethno-religious particularity. They describe the hegemony of modern American-style psychotherapy as "psychological Constantinianism," an alliance between religion and power akin to the fourth-century integration of Church and state. The authors are concerned that in exporting modern Western psychological vocabulary and method, American psychologists undermine and erode the values of distinctive ethnic, cultural, and religious traditions in non-western therapeutic contexts. The authors propose a peaceable Christian approach to psychotherapy that resists the "violence" of Western psychology in indigenous and non-western cultures and in the United States, an approach that could lead American psychologists to value the unique ethnic and religious contexts of non-western clients and encourage therapeutic settings where ethno-religious language is respected. Dueck and Reimer cast their approach as a christological psychotherapy that identifies "the radical particularity (tradition)" of both client and therapist and embraces "suffering in the hope of Christ's work of reconciliation and healing in the client" (56).

The authors affirm that a peaceable psychology is based on a firm foundation: the concrete life narrative and message of Jesus Christ. To make Christ foundational means that the authors begin with the commitment that "God is known to us in a particular person, Jesus Christ" (203). They insist that "our clinical and ethical obligation is to participate in what God is already doing in the life of the client" (214). They maintain that as Christians, peaceable therapists are to be witnesses to the work and presence

of Christ, who mediates healing. Considering the church "an ethical community of discernment," they claim that therapists need the wisdom of the Christian community in a therapeutic dialogue with clients (212).

One shortcoming is that the book does not offer a concrete critical method for differentiating between those parts of ethnic and religious tradition that should be maintained and those that should be critically examined or discouraged in therapeutic dialogue. The authors suggest that such a method will be "locally" and "collaboratively" determined, but they provide little insight into how to choose appropriate ethno-religious theory and practice in different contexts while strengthening Christianity's unique identity. The danger is that Christianity may become just another religion among many and Jesus Christ just another man among sages. By focusing so heavily on the values of each ethnicity and religion, the authors risk falling into the traps of relativism and sectarianism.

Nevertheless, *A Peaceable Psychology* is valuable in that it offers a new perspective on Christian and secular psychology and psychotherapy, returns to Jesus Christ as the foundation, and integrates psychology and Christianity using historical, philosophical, and theological viewpoints. It calls for a rethinking of the nature and role of Christian psychology amid the plurality of multireligious, multiethnic, multilingual, and multicultural contexts. It is helpful for psychologists and psychotherapists who are committed to following Jesus Christ, for those interested in an open, meaningful dialogue with Christian practitioners from various political and cultural contexts, and for those who seek to integrate theology and psychology. Those interested in Christian psychology and psychotherapy, and in particular cross-cultural therapy, will find in this book valuable information and resources. Above all, this volume challenges pastors and theologians currently working in faith communities to rediscover and strengthen the central themes of Christian faith in the context of a discerning Christian community.

JIN KYUNG PARK
PRINCETON THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

The Renewed Homiletic. Edited by O. Wesley Allen, Jr. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2010, 141 pages with DVD.

Many homileticians consider the New Homiletic to be in the rear view mirror of academic discussions of preaching. Any homiletician with contact with preachers realizes this is far from the case in the North American pulpit. The New Homiletic continues to exert significant influence on preaching in North America. As a result *The Renewed Homiletic* offers an intriguing chance to converse with several key figures of the movement in retrospect.

Wesley Allen serves as the editor of the volume and provides an accessible introduction to the New Homiletic in the first chapter. This chapter first describes the historical precursors as well as the theological and hermeneutical influences to the late twentieth-century movement. Students who are unaware of the New Homiletic's key contributions will find this summary to be instructive. The introduction of inductive forms, narrative preaching, unity of form and content, evocation of an event, move from the imperative to the indicative, and so forth help give the reader a sense of the whole before discovering (or rediscovering) the parts.

The remaining chapters are structured in two parts. First, each of the "five pillars" of the New Homiletic (Charles Rice, Fred Craddock, Henry Mitchell, Eugene Lowry, and David Buttrick) presents a personal and academic reflection on his "core contributions" to homiletics (2). Each homiletician then analyzes changing contexts since their work was published, offering adjustments to their previous work. The second portion of each chapter consists of a critical response to the lecture/essay presented by another homiletician. Given the all-male nature of the "five pillars," Allen and The Re(New)ed Homiletic conference are to be congratulated in bringing in more diverse voices in the response sections. Since these essays were originally presented as lectures and responses in a conference, the book has a highly personal, even conversational feel.

Poets are not always the best interpreters of their own work. Hearing a poet give a public reading is more often than not a disappointing experience. Further, ask an aging man to reflect recent cultural changes and you are most likely to get nostalgia mixed with twinges of grief and wonder. It is the same here. Close followers of these authors will find many of their reflections on their own work to be disappointing with very little new grist for the academic mill. The real contributions of each chapter come from the diverse responders who (mostly) courageously press the proposals of the New Homiletic with valid critiques. The commitment to universal experience and the overly heavy burden placed on the "preacher's skill in crafting an experience for the listener's, rather than God's action" are two of the critiques that ring most clearly (62). One is philosophical. Postmodern thinkers sniff out the vestiges of modernity in the New Homiletic quickly. The other is certainly theological, and perhaps pastoral.

More than any other writer, Buttrick catches the wind of post-modernity and is willing to tack his homiletical sails. His essay focuses on the postmodern rejection of the "fiction of one" (110). His most salient critique of the New Homiletic is that it "focused on the individual, a single self in self-awareness with personal needs" (110). His call for revision of the New Homiletic is to learn to "address the interhuman" (112). This leads Buttrick to a renewed need for theological, rhetorical, and prophetic preaching. For Buttrick, each of these elements of preaching must be newly envisioned from a perspective of the interhuman. Alyce McKenzie is right to suggest that this is much more than "tinkering" with the New Homiletic (122). Though this celebrates a task already well underway in homlietical literature, it is a pleasant surprise to find a member of the New Homiletic beating the drum.

New students of preaching will find *The Renewed Homiletic* to be a relatively quick and accessible introduction to the concepts of each writer under the umbrella of the coherence of the movement. This view of diversity within commonality gives a good sense of the disparate thinkers and the common themes. More informed homileticians will likely find the discussions rehearsing concepts and critiques already well-known, and well-worn. For teachers, the introductory overview of the New Homiletic by Wesley Allen may be the best resource in the book. It provides a concise

yet accurate picture of the New Homiletic along with a summary of each key thinker.

Whatever critiques may be offered, the New Homiletic cannot quickly be forgotten. The inductive logic of sermons will continue to rule the day. Openness to hearer participation in the completion of sermonic meaning will increase. Certainly evocation will continue to be prized above and beyond mere information in the sermonic enterprise. These things are true even if the perspective on these points is radically altered by postmodern critiques of the New Homiletic's assumptions.

DAVID B. WARD
PRINCETON THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

When God Shows Up: A History of Protestant Youth Ministry in America. By Mark H. Senter III. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2010, 363 pages.

In *When God Shows Up,* veteran youth pastor and professor of educational ministries at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School Mark Senter III provides a great service to the church and academy by beginning a conversation about a historically neglected field of study. For far too long youth ministry was understood as a corollary to the "important" work of the larger adult church and as such, peripheral to the life of many Protestant communities. As this perception has faded and increased attention given to the vital nature of such ministry within the church, the academic world has taken note. In the past twenty years numerous programs of youth work and conferences related to the key facets of such ministry have taken place in the academic world to great effect. With the addition of Senter's work, new opportunities for reflection and action readily present themselves.

Having written extensively in the field, Senter develops a theoretical framework for understanding youth ministry in historical context. Delving back as far as Cotton Mather and Jonathan Edwards, he attempts to organize his study around the idea that youth ministry has always maintained a desire to see God "show up" through meaningful spiritual experiences in the lives of young people. Because the apparatus for doing so has changed over time, various forms of youth ministry have characterized the course of the American Protestant experience. The pattern that emerged was a

cyclical one: three fifty-year cycles initially characterized by grass-roots parachurch organizing before adoption by local churches and an eventual disconnect with changing culture. Senter's implicit suggestion that youth ministry must change or die permeates the pages of the book.

The three main cycles Senter discusses are as follows: the age of associations (1824–1875), the time of youth societies (1881–1925), and the era of relational outreach (1933–1989). For each of the periods key organizations or movements help to serve as historical representatives. The earliest of these are the YMCA and youth temperance movements, the former of which has had a well-documented journey from a center of spirituality to the simple street-corner gym. The following era was heavily dominated by the presence of the Society of Christian Endeavor, a national organization that had connections in many local churches. Here Senter highlights the tendency for a switch from a desire for spiritual encounter towards youth ministry as a simple means of enforcing morality. In the latter half of the twentieth century, Youth for Christ and Young Life are provided as examples of parachurch organizations that adapted to and worked within a culture of newly-formed "teenagers" united by the common experience of high school and the resulting social stratification.

Ambitious and helpful as the book may be, as Senter attempts to fill out his thesis with an explication of the historical record things get a bit muddy. Though clearly well-researched and a vital contribution to the burgeoning field of youth ministry literature, the work can get so bogged down with details that his thesis concerning cycles and the narrative, as he attempts to describe it, falls by the wayside. The chapters that comprise the most recent era will serve here as representative. After spending a number of pages discussing mainline ministry through the mid-1960s, readers are regaled with somewhat different parachurch ministries of the era before returning to a discussion of evangelical youth programs and the big youth rallies. By retreading the same period four different times, ostensibly under the same interpretive umbrella and including a panoply of details that seem disconnected or superfluous at best and contradictory at worst, Senter's loss of focus in these areas diminish the stature of a project that at the outset seemed filled with explanatory promise. More attention to the unifying elements in the various forms of ministry and less to the

various ways youth work was done in different churches would be a helpful starting point.

That Senter never purports to be an academic historian must be taken into consideration in this critique—if nothing else, his extensive research and the vigor with which he writes provides clear evidence of serious scholarly effort. Whether or not his thesis can bear up under further research remains to be seen; the historical record and the life of the Church is always more complicated than our theories can possibly allow. Standing on its own, the book is therefore not the magisterial work it might hope to be, but rather one that will serve as a helpful introduction to the history of youth ministry for those heretofore unaware. Senter is at his best when he takes the time to analyze the idea and development of the concept of adolescence and the spiritualities and ministries that have surrounded it over time. As he does so in the beginning of *When God Shows Up* and at its conclusion, where he reflects on the challenges facing youth ministry in the 1990s and beyond, the book is worth the price of admission.

Because the scope of the book is such a wide one, Senter takes time to speak to its limitations, and, in his concluding remarks, reflects on numerous areas of research that would expand upon and complement *When God Shows Up*. As a beginning point for further study these suggestions—indeed, the entirety of the book—are immensely helpful. The ways in which *When God Shows Up* answers questions one had only vaguely pondered before and points to new ones that were never previously considered will likely mark it as a seed-bearing work for years to come. Though not fated to become the definitive text in the field, it ought to be a first stopping point for all those interested in academic study of the church's historical, contemporary, and future approaches to youth ministry. For youth pastors and others involved in the daily activities of the church, Senter's book is vital for uncovering the changing nature of such ministry and casting light on the ways in which addressing emerging culture requires a willingness to break with the past. Numerous sacred cows are revealed and upended in a way that will speak volumes to any twenty-first-century Christian youth worker.

All told, Senter's work is essential reading material for all those who are called to work with teenagers as they continue to wait, plan, and minister for that moment "when God shows up."

JOSHUA R. ZIEFLE
PRINCETON THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

Wind, Sun, Soil, Spirit: Biblical Ethics and Climate Change. By Carol S. Robb. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2010, 155 pages.

As a consultant to representatives of the World Council of Churches (WCC) Climate Change Program in 2000, Carol S. Robb maintained that "though the people of the Mediterranean world knew nothing about climate change . . . the New Testament texts are surprisingly relevant to our debate over climate change policies" (ix). This book is an amplification and elaboration of that message. Robb, the Margaret Dollar Professor of Christian Social Ethics at San Francisco Theological Seminary, contributes to a growing collection of recent books and articles addressing climate change from religious perspectives. As the title suggests, she explores the complex moral dimensions of climate change in relation to the New Testament as a resource for ethical reflection. Two premises undergird the argument of this book: (1) Climate change is a moral issue, and (2) The New Testament is a resource for guiding Christian discernment for public discussions regarding climate change and ecological matters. The central thesis is that in contrast to what Robb names the "Kingdom of Oil" the New Testament summons Christians to enliven communities with alternative visions, practices, and policies that emulate what Jesus referred to as the "Kingdom of God."

The book is divided into three sections. In the first section, Robb elucidates the moral dimensions that attend climate change deliberations in the context of international conventions and treaties. The multiple moral discourses include calculations of consequences, considerations of fairness or justice, acceptance of moral responsibility, commitments to moral consistency and the prioritizing of values. For Robb, although each of these modes of discourse which employ "the language of the public square" is necessary for moral reflection on climate policies, considerations of 'the

good life', or which future to value, may compel us "to employ religious language or be explicit about religious commitments" (45). It is not clear why she draws this particular distinction between religious and public discourse, or how she conceives of translation between the two modes. Nevertheless, after a thorough consideration of four hypothetical future scenarios, Robb declares that the future should be shaped by patterns and practices that protect the following norms: ecological effectiveness, sustainable communities, and biodiversity. To these three norms Robb seeks to add a fourth: "coherence with the New Testament witness" (64).

The second section is framed by the question, "What would close attention to the Gospels and Paul's letters do to inform our contemporary moral deliberations on what is a good life?" (64). Robb's interpretation of these scriptures relies on a variety of scholarship associated with the quest for the historical Jesus. Historical criticism, social sciences, and literary and cultural criticism shape her methodological priorities. Employing these tools, Robb concludes that both Jesus and Paul, in different ways, challenged the hierarchical and imperial systems of power in their time. Jesus, a Galilean prophet, was a reformer of the Jewish temple state centralized in Jerusalem whose revolutionary "task was subordinated to his status as the Messiah/Christ in institutionalized Christianity. Too bad," she concludes, "The kingdom of God still needs to be organized" (84). The kingdom of God—the political and economic standard by which all rule, governance, and order are to be assessed—signifies a just social order in contrast to the practices of the Roman empire in Jesus' time, and to the "Empire of Oil" in ours.

Robb expresses greater ambivalence about the relation of Paul's activities to climate change. She holds that insofar as Paul's missionary activities were fueled by the Isaianic notion of the restoration of creation, his focus was the jubilee justice of God. However, insofar as he intended to convince fellow 'Israelites' that Jesus was the resurrected Messiah, the justice of God may have been secondary. This supposed dichotomy, leads to her ambivalence regarding the relevance of Paul's project to her own (137). However, this point calls for further elaboration. It is not evident that these potential motives for Paul's missionary journeys are necessarily in tension, or that the latter would diminish a commitment to the justice of

God. She implies throughout this section that an understanding of Jesus as the Messiah inhibits a commitment to the justice or kingdom of God on earth, but does not expound this unnecessary assumption. Nonetheless, she does demonstrate that Jesus and Paul, in different ways, supported social, economic, and political alternatives to the practices of empire exemplified today in the 'Kingdom of Oil'.

In section three, the conclusion, Robb seeks to relate this biblical social ethic to contemporary issues of climate change, advocating creative communal use of wind, sun, and soil for enlivened communities. Here she articulates a vision of the Reign of God that requires healthy communities and ecosystems characterized by community rather than corporate wind projects, solar paneled rooftops rather than solar swaths of the Mojave Desert, and ecologically informed citizens active at various levels of political engagement and policy formation.

Ultimately, it is unclear whether or not Robb believes that the normative implications of the New Testament texts are crucial for moral discernment on climate change. She does, after all, determine the best hypothetical future based on her own norms prior to any consideration of the biblical texts. It seems rather that she considers these texts precisely because Christian communities *do* turn to them for guidance, and she wants to expose what could remain otherwise opaque connections to climate change. The book does elucidate some of the most complex problems involved in climate change discussions. It also reveals the multivalent ethical perspectives that attend these ecological issues as well as the reductionism of limiting moral discourse to any one mode.

In the end, though, Robb aspires to make explicit the links between moral deliberation over climate change for crafting governing policy and the insights of New Testament texts, the nature of their relation remains somewhat murky. She is clear that the New Testament can provide normative guidance for Christian moral discernment, but less clear about if or how these norms require translation for public moral discussion. It seems she unnecessarily parses public moral discourse from religious considerations of the good life, without providing a way to bridge the chasm of intelligibility.

This book is perhaps most useful for Christian communities seeking to discern the relevance of the New Testament for their engagement of climate change issues. It serves less as a critical engagement with, and more as an introduction to, certain currents of biblical scholarship and modes of moral discourse. Robb affirms the need for new policies and treaties, acknowledges the complexity of moral dimensions these entail, and encourages Christian communities to contribute to the debates that surround climate change and global warming.

EMILY DUMLER
PRINCETON THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

Engaging Heidegger. By Richard Capobianco. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2010, 182 pages.

The work of Martin Heidegger is a tangle of abstract prose, intentional misspellings, and obscure neologisms. Trying to untangle this knot requires more skill and patience than most novice philosophers possess. In my experience in speaking with students about Heidegger, it is not necessarily the ideas that trip up the reader, it is the words that lead to the idea which are so hard to penetrate. What exactly is the difference between "Being" (*Sein*) and "Beying" (*Seyn*)? Or "Being itself" (*Sein Selbst*) and "Beingness" (*Seindheit*)? One gets the impression that Heidegger is intentional in his word usage, but it is rare that a definition of these words is ever provided. What most students need is a way in; they need a thread that can connect the various ideas that form the corpus of Heidegger's work. For a long time Heidegger scholars saw "Being" (*Sein*) as the thread that connected the work of Heidegger. Yet in recent years, scholars like Kenneth Maly and Thomas Sheehan have questioned this assumption and defined Heidegger's topic as either 'emergence' or 'meaningfulness.' This new brand of Heideggerian scholarship asserts that the phenomenon of Being is indeed a topic of Heidegger's early work but is not present enough in the later work to be representative of the whole of Heidegger's thinking.

In his new book, *Engaging Heidegger*, Richard Capobianco, professor of Philosophy at Stonehill College, attempts to retrieve Being from this new Heideggerian scholarship and place it back in the center of Heidegger's

work. For Capobianco, Being is the single phenomenon that is named and renamed throughout all of Heidegger's work. This idea of Being inspires a variety of different names: *Lichtung, Es gibt, Ereignis, aletheia, Anwesen*, but the topic remains the same: Being. As Capobianco puts it, "all of these names are the same (*das Selbe*), but not simply identical (*das Gleiche*) in an empty, purely formal, logical sense" (4). Capobianco's book is a collection of essays that brings into sharper relief the words and terms that surround the central phenomenon of Being. In the first essay, "The Fate of Being," Capobianco retrieves Being from those who would marginalize it by examining some of Heidegger's last lectures. Capobianco argues that even in the twilight years of his life Heidegger was still examining the meaning of Being and thus, concludes Capobianco, Being cannot be dismissed as a topic of the younger Heidegger. Rather, it must be regarded as the topic that animated his work up until the end of his life.

With this conclusion in hand, Capobianco forwards a number of different essays concerning those words that surround and animate Being itself. In the second essay, Capobianco argues that Heidegger's conception of *Ereignis* is not necessarily a turn away from Being but is another name for Being itself. In the fifth and sixth essays of the book, Capobianco describes Heidegger's initial appropriation of the metaphor of light and its eventual evolution into his conception of the clearing (*Lichtung*) by way of Plato and the Greek understanding of *aletheia*. In the final essay of the book, "Limit and Transgression," Capobianco compares the interpretations of Sophocles' *Antigone* forwarded by Heidegger and French theorist Jacques Lacan. Capobianco argues that these readings of Antigone "share an enthusiasm for the transgression of convention and custom as a necessary condition of authentic selfhood and creativity" (132).

There are three essays in *Engaging Heidegger* that stand out. The third and fourth essays, "The Turn towards Home" and "From Angst to Astonishment," are good examples of Capobianco's exegetical skill and synthetic thinking. In "The Turn towards Home," Capobianco examines the transition in Heidegger's understanding of homelessness and angst in his early work toward a more generous possibility of homecoming that appears in his later work. In "From Angst to Astonishment," Capobianco examines the evolution of Heidegger's understanding of *Angst* as forwarded in *Be-*

ing and Time toward an idea of astonishment that appears in his later work. Capobianco states that "from angst to astonishment . . . is one way of describing the development of Heidegger's thinking about the defining mood of authentic existence" (85). While these two essays are prime examples of Capobianco's skill in charting the trajectory of Heidegger's thought, the highlight of this book is Capobianco's essay, "Building: Centering, Decentering, Recentering." Whereas most of this book is concerned with detailed exegesis of Heidegger's work, this essay focuses on the way that Heidegger's work has been appropriated by the creative discipline of architecture. Capobianco examines the two strains of architecture that have used Heidegger's work as their foundation. One strain, represented by thinkers like Christian Norberg-Schulz, has been influenced by Heidegger's examination of dwelling in the famous essay, "Building, Dwelling, Thinking." These architects have appropriated this work toward conceiving of architecture as a mode of gathering and centering. Still another strain of thinkers, like Jacques Derrida, has been inspired by Heidegger's description of *Angst* in *Being and Time* and has led to a conception of architecture as "decentering." Capobianco's discussion of these divergent schools of thought deviates from his task of parsing the work of Heidegger in order to discuss the influence that Heidegger has had upon a creative discipline like architecture. In a book that is very concerned with adding to the internal discussion of Heidegger research, this essay stood out for its unique examination of the effects of Heidegger's thinking.

The strength of *Engaging Heidegger* is Capobianco's lucid exegesis and interpretation of Heidegger's work. There is little doubt that Capobianco is a fine interpreter and capable of tilling new ground in Heideggerian research. I am especially impressed at the ease with which he handled the language of Heidegger and the clear and succinct way that he provided definitions for some of Heidegger's most complex ideas. There is no doubt that Capobianco can dive deep and swim long in the waters of Heidegger, yet I appreciate his willingness to provide opportunities for the novice reader to come up for air. With that being said, this book should not be used as an introduction to the work of Heidegger. Capobianco's essays are mostly part of a larger internal discussion with the other Heidegger scholars about the broad meanings of Heidegger's words and ideas. For those

who are new to the work of Heidegger, this discussion will be very difficult to enter and hard to understand. Those who have a deeper familiarity with Heidegger's work but would like more substantive definitions and discussions regarding his word choice and the evolution of his thought would find this book very helpful.

ADAM W. HEARLSON
PRINCETON THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

The Devil Reads Derrida: And Other Essays on the University, the Church, Politics, and the Arts. By James K. A. Smith. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2009, 161 pages.

The recent collection of thirty essays by James Smith, Calvin College's prolific professor of philosophy (he has published seven books since 2006), manifests notable diversity on a number of levels. The essays are grouped, as suggested by the subtitle, into four sections: "Faith on the Ground: On Discipleship," "Schools of Faith: On the University," "Faith in America: On Politics and the Church," and "Picturing Faith: Criticism." All the essays but one are republished pieces that have appeared previously in sources ranging from *Christianity Today* to beliefnet.com to the *Harvard Divinity Bulletin* to posts on the author's blog. Throughout these essays, the theme of faith—particularly the faith of the Reformed and Evangelical tradition—is explored with an eye that is both critical and charitable.

In the opening essay, which serves as the volume's introduction and is the only previously unpublished piece, Smith sets out the *raison d'être* of essays that are unapologetically "popular." Over the last few decades, Christian philosophers, theologians, and biblical scholars have sought greater credibility and respect within their academic guilds, which has directed attention toward the academy, rather than the church generally and lay people in particular. Smith believes this has created a situation in which Christians have "found themselves looking for wisdom and guidance where they could get it. The result is that they picked up what was available—in Christian bookstores, magazines, and perhaps, most significantly, on Christian radio. And since Christian intellectuals had pretty much vacated these spaces, the result is that the Christian public began

to nourish themselves on . . . a largely unhealthy diet" (xiv). The impetus to "speak into this vacuum" for Smith stems not from an impulse of retaliation but from a "hermeneutic of charity": "a stance that approaches 'popular' religion not with suspicion, or condescending cynicism, but with fundamental affirmation—yea, *love*—for 'ordinary' Christians" (xv). It is the lives of ordinary Christians that form the starting point of the essays. Thus the essays in this volume explore faith's relation to diverse aspects of life.

One of the main themes that Smith consistently returns to is the goodness of "embodiment." For Smith, the incarnation is paradigmatic of God's activity in the world and is key to our understanding of that work: "As Christians, we also found our very confession and life on the fact that the 'Word became flesh' . . . . If we really believe the Incarnation, then there is a deep sense in which we confess faith in the flesh: that the Lord is manifest in the flesh, and that this should translate into an affirmation of the flesh" (149). The author is careful to attend to the difference between flesh as materiality versus flesh as a power of this world. Smith emphasizes the goodness of embodiment as an affirmation of the goodness of creation, which he reiterates in a variety of ways, from criticizing the underlying Platonism of movies like *Beauty and the Beast* and *The Matrix*, to exploring how city architecture either promotes or hinders loving our neighbors in concrete ways. He even encourages his Reformed brothers and sisters to consider how Pentecostalism's combined emphasis on God's sovereignty and highly embodied experiences and expressions of faith might provide a salutary counterbalance to "habits of worship that treat us as if we're brains-on-a-stick" (29). Smith also does an admirable job of helping the reader see how in the realm of politics, both sides of an issue are often informed by assumptions that are dubious at best. It is, however, in examining artistic expressions that Smith is at his best. Whether he is tracing the intertwined trajectories of faith and abandonment in the poetry of Franz Wright, or arguing for the sacralizing role of the camera in "American Beauty," Smith helps the reader appreciate the depth, significance, and complexity of a work, always with an eye to where God may show up unexpectedly or, conversely, hide when invoked.

The ability to find signs of God's grace and activity in some unlikely places is especially evident at the end of the introductory essay discussed above. Here Smith draws an extended analogy between the movie *Little Miss Sunshine* and the place of the Christian scholar among her less than intellectual brothers and sisters in the faith—"folk who would embarrass us if we took them along to the MLA convention or the next meeting of the American Historical Society" (xix). Smith notes that the Christian scholar is too often like one of the film's characters, Frank—a middle-aged man who is thrown into a situation of having to deal with his odd and often annoying family, despite the fact that, as Frank is quick to point out, he is "the preeminent Proust scholar in the United States." Over the course of the film, Frank is compelled as part of this family to share in their mission that, though filled with absurdity, reveals their strengths and creates a bond among them. Thus, by the end of the movie, "Frank is reminded of his identification with 'these people'—indeed, once he comes to love them in all their absurd brokenness, and recognize that they have loved him in all his own brokenness—[then] he is also in a place to serve them *as* a scholar, to wear his learning more lightly and offer it in a way that is inviting, helpful, constructive, and maybe even loving" (xx). Smith, with these essays, has in fact done just that, and the collection deserves a wide reading.

JUDITH STACK-NELSON
PRINCETON THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

Covenant Economics: A Biblical Vision of Justice for All. By Richard A. Horsley. Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2009, 193 pages.

Richard Horsley ventures into new territory with *Covenant Economics.* The author of over twenty studies of the New Testament, and professor at the University of Massachusetts, turns to the "moral" economies of the Old and New Testaments. The resulting historical investigation is fueled by a commitment to resist corporate influence on the "inalienable" rights of citizens in contemporary democratic societies. In this work, the author attempts to analogously link the imperial powers of the ancient world with the interests of transnational corporations today. Readers familiar with

Horsley's work will recognize the author's practiced attention to the logic of empire as a primary interpretive lens for the biblical material.

The text is clearly organized into two major sections. Part one, "Economic Justice and the Common Good," explores themes from the Old Testament. Horsley explains how the ancient Israelites organized social-economic life according to the Mosaic Covenant. Part two, "The Renewal of Covenantal Community," focuses upon aspects of the New Testament that appropriate and reinterpret the covenantal commitments of the Jewish tradition. While the bulk of the book focuses upon selected biblical texts, Horsley's interest in the application of biblical principles emerges strongly in the introduction and conclusion. In these organizing and largely reflective chapters, Horsley is concerned with how contemporary citizens have relinquished rights to corporate entities. One significant strength of the text is how Horsley succeeds in presenting a compelling framework for reading the prophetic tradition and the Jesus movement as understanding economic concerns in covenantal terms. While Horsley maintains that modern industrial economic terminology is anachronistic to the context of the ancient world, the author clearly demonstrates how "economic concerns run throughout the Bible" (xvi). Though Horsley is reluctant to derive normative principles for modern industrial society, preferring instead to focus on descriptive readings of biblical texts, he stresses throughout that the bible is concerned with *all* of life. This central theme is the most successful aspect of the text.

One of the major themes of the book is a distinction between political and economic rights. For instance, Horsley argues that God's covenant with Israel functioned in such a way that society members were "responsible for sharing their resources liberally with those in serious need" (49). The economics of the covenant did not allow for the creation of wage-slaves, but instead attempted to protect divinely promised rights to property (i.e., happiness). What remains unclear is how the late-modern interpreter is to practically translate the tribal agrarian practices of the biblical "moral economy" to the complex social relationships of contemporary pluralistic societies. Similarly, at times the author's claims regarding modern societies remain too vague to do much good. For example, regarding the "separation of church and state" clause of the U. S. Constitution, Horsley

states, "In effect the churches agreed not to interfere seriously in political affairs and the state not to interfere in matters of faith and church governance" (18). One is left to wonder how Christian abolitionists, the social gospel movement, anti-lynching campaigns, the Civil Rights movement, and public theologians such as Reinhold Niebuhr fit this generalization. Additionally, the transposition of Enlightenment ideals (life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness) onto the biblical covenant always seems out of place. The trouble is not that Horsley seeks to show the relevance of biblical covenants to modern justice concerns, but rather that this correlation does not do enough to protect against an implicit endorsement of the imperial, and often religiously inflected, nationalist ideology that permeates sectors of contemporary American society.

At the start of the conclusion, Horsley lists a series of compelling and challenging interpretive questions for the protection of people's economic rights according to covenantal ideals (165). Yet, immediately after lifting up these questions, the author offers a series of disclaimers with regard to his qualifications on precisely these matters. We do well to appreciate Horsley's respect for disciplinary boundaries and academic specialization, but more needs to be said in terms of application and instruction. For instance, Horsley's strong claims about the impact of NAFTA in the Americas, the monopolizing strategies of corporations like Wal-Mart, and the disproportionate influence of transnational corporations on campaign financing and market deregulation are left unsubstantiated and underdeveloped. Similarly, when the author claims that corporations have learned to "motivate people by fear and anxiety" and that credit cards "seduce people into the immediate gratification of desire," (169) there are no footnotes, further explanation, or suggested resources for activism. Even for those readers, like this one, who are deeply sympathetic to Horsley's economic concerns and premonitions, more must be said to mobilize readers to specific acts of resistance against the faceless powers of market capitalism.

Covenant Economics is a valuable contribution in that it raises awareness about the scope of biblical concern for economic realities. Horsley's attention to the scriptural material is, as always, careful and illuminating. The author compellingly reminds the reader that the biblical view of reality is historical, and therefore suggests, "we can remind ourselves that an

unregulated global system of megacorporations is not inevitable and permanent" (171). This is good news, to be sure. What is missing, however, is sustained attention to particular practices that will inculcate the economic virtues Horsley reads out of the biblical texts. In sum, what are needed are resources for initiating and sustaining the counter-imperial witness Horsley suggests is possible in our religious communities. *Covenant Economics* is written for a general readership and is clearly organized, for individual reflection as well as group discussion, through study questions at the end of each chapter. It is best suited for undergraduates or ambitious church groups.

NATHANIEL VAN YPEREN
PRINCETON THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

Defining Love: A Philosophic, Scientific, and Theological Engagement. By Thomas Jay Oord. Grand Rapids: Brazos, 2010, 212 pages.

Thomas Jay Oord is a self-identified post-modern Wesleyan theologian committed to open and relational theology. At the nexus of these various identities is the exploration of love. Over the last decade Oord has produced several significant works exploring love, beginning with *Thy Name and Thy Nature is Love* (Nashville: Kingswood, 2001), and including contributions to the *Science of Love: The Wisdom of Well-Being* (Philadelphia: Templeton Press, 2004), *The Many Facets of Love: Philosophical Exhortations* (Cambridge: Cambridge Scholars Press, 2007); *The Altruism Reader* (Philadelphia: Templeton Foundation Press, 2008); and *Love Among Us* (Denver: Outskirts Pres, 2009). Even though sections of *Defining Love* have been presented elsewhere, the collection, analysis, and synthesis of these various contributions provide a more coherent and readily accessible form that is valuable to interdisciplinary explorations of love.

In his first chapter, Oord offers the definition of love his decade of research has produced: "to love is to act intentionally, in sympathetic response to others (including God), to promote overall well-being" (29). This definition is explained and qualified in chapter one, supported through the natural and social sciences in chapters two through five, and integrated with Oord's overall theological perspective in chapter six. Oord's method-

ological commitment is that science and theology exist in a great degree of "harmony," "consonance," or positive relation even though the "two domains are not identical" and therefore require dialogical exploration (177). The structure of the book (from sciences to theology) and occasional phrases such as "a theology of love informed by the sciences" may lead some readers to conclude that Oord's methodology is a one-way arrow from science to theology. A careful reading, however, will reveal Oord's theology guiding and providing critical perspective to his exploration, interpretation, and critique of scientific thought throughout the book.

One of the many strengths of Oord's study is its holistic nature and emphasis on a teleological orientation for love. His definition touches on the various ways humans interact with the world including the cognitive and affective (sympathetic), volitional and active (intentionally act), and purposive or strategic (to promote) spheres. Oord is also careful to extradite his thoughts from utilitarian perspectives of the greater common good, while maintaining a larger view of love than the interpersonal. For Oord, "an act of love establishes or increases well-being" not just of the near and dear, but also the stranger, enemy, and "even includes God's own happiness" (25).

This broad and inclusive view of love requires some qualification and limitation for it to be applicable. To love all with equal altruism, argues Oord, would be equivalent to two individuals in a desert continually passing a glass of water between them until the water evaporates and they both die. As a humorous analogy, it serves to bring a realistic perspective to discussions of love. Especially in Christian discussions, love can often become more of a heavy burden than a grace-oriented freedom. Further, unless these moralistic narratives are limited they may actually serve to prop up cycles of violence and abuse by promoting limitless self-sacrifice as the Christian ideal.

Theological critics will no doubt balk at the parenthetical reference to God. Oord does not intend for this parenthetical notation to marginalize theological considerations, nor to imply that one can transfer human qualities of love directly to God. On the contrary, his intention is to suggest, "love is impossible without divine action" (182). Still, the structure of the definition is certainly focused on the nature of human love and is indica-

tive of the primary emphasis of the book. How we love is on center stage. How God loves plays a structural second fiddle. To Oord's credit, lying behind each of his discussions of human love is the conviction that God's "casual activity serves as the ground and inspiration of all creaturely love" (199). In this way, he can affirm that we love because God first loved us.

Drawing together strands from theology, biology, sociology, psychology, and philosophy *Defining Love* is a compelling example of interdisciplinary research useful to many. For those interested in integrating scientific and theological investigation with the meaning, varied nature, extent, and potential of love, Oord's work will provide an invaluable review of the available literature as well as a thoughtful and careful conversation partner for future work. Further, the definition of love offered by Oord, as informed by the nuances of thought and research throughout the book, offers academic conversations on love a measure of specificity and clarity.

Christian theologians of some stripes will find the theological conclusions in *Defining Love* to be largely determined in advance by a pre-determined theological commitment. Those wrestling with theodicy will likely conclude Oord's argument regarding evil to be relatively unoriginal regarding a loving God, free will, and the resulting division of suffering into true evils and not-so-true evils. Hurricanes, mudslides, lightning strikes, and accidents without any culpable scapegoat remain problematic. The ethics of God's free giving, or ideal contributions, without divine intervention in the case of evil are also troubling.

Keeping these difficulties in view, *Defining Love* does what it promises to do. It engages in a sweeping interdisciplinary analysis of the nature, meaning, object, and limit of human and divine love. It offers a holistic definition of love that simultaneously gathers up the fruit of recent research and serves as the groundwork for further interdisciplinary research. In a world decidedly lacking in altruism, we need this reminder that with God the Good Samaritan is possible.

DAVID B. WARD
PRINCETON THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

Redeemed Bodies: Women Martyrs in Early Christianity. By Gail P. C. Streete. Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2009, 177 pages.

Gail P. C. Streete, Department Chair of Religious Studies at Rhodes College, provides a tremendous service to both early Christian studies and gender studies by setting these fields in conversation around the phenomenon of martyrdom. This work, like Streete's previous books, *Her Image of Salvation: Female Saviors and Formative Christianity* and *The Strange Woman: Power and Sex in the Bible*, reflects Streete's interest in women, their bodies, and their power to serve as models to be emulated.

Streete argues for the importance of an audience in finding meaning in the otherwise horrific occasion of martyrdom, and her book serves the function of providing just such an audience to early Christian martyrs Perpetua, Felicitas, and Thecla. By reading these ancient stories alongside of accounts of modern female martyrs, Streete suggests that "there may be ways of understanding what seems anomalous in the present, by linking the present to a past, admittedly idealized, in a way that continues to give meaning to both" (8).

The opening chapter of *Redeemed Bodies* frames Streete's argument by suggesting that physical bodies become an important site unto which a variety of ideologies can be inscribed. As she sketches a variety of both Greco-Roman and early Christian approaches to the body, Streete observes that women's bodies in particular become the battleground on which a war concerning societal virtues is fought. In this way, the body's audience becomes the crucial interpreter of that body. Women can use their bodies to construct identity through asceticism or martyrdom, but female martyrs can be acclaimed as such only when an external audience, which may or may not be sympathetic to the martyr's own ambitions, attributes meaning to her lifeless body.

Having established the power of bodies to serve as weapons in the hands of proponents of numerous ideologies, Streete turns in the next chapter to consider the content of the message the bodies of the martyrs are sending. The very nature of martyrdom, Streete suggests, requires a public venue in which the martyr's witness can be published, and it is precisely this publicizing that makes martyrdom so troublesome for early Christian women.

Because of a desire to avoid instances of immodest feminine display, later interpreters of the female martyrs were inclined to robe their subjects in the masculinity proper to actors in the public sphere. In this way, the bodies of the female martyrs are used against them in the service of a message about proper gender roles, a message arguably foreign to the martyrs' original intent.

In light of the observations made in the first two chapters, Streete turns in chapter three to the tale of the martyrdom of Perpetua and Felicitas to inquire about the message early Christianity inscribed upon their martyred bodies. With Cyprian and Augustine, Streete observes a "co-optation of Perpetua into the service of male-dominated Christian discourse" (58). She suggests that these female martyrs could only be safe for a male-led institutional church after their actions had been re-cast in masculine terms which implicitly compared Felicitas's pain in childbirth to male pain in combat and overly emphasized the women's abandonment of biological families. The great tragedy in reading Perpetua and Felicitas in masculine terms is that their actions become "unnatural" and "in the world of late antiquity, the home of emerging Christianity, manly women are no better than effeminate men" (71).

As Streete notes early in her book, both martyrdom and asceticism provided early Christian women with ways to construct identity using their bodies, and chapter four explores the way in which the latter method is bound up with Thecla. Streete suggests that even more than the story of Perpetua, that of Thecla achieved great importance to a vast audience, and its power was such that Tertullian felt challenged enough to launch a polemic against Thecla's example. Part of the danger of Thecla, Streete implies, is that even without the aid of secondary interpreters, Thecla claims a male identity for herself by speaking and acting in the public sphere. This claim to male power posed a threat, and thus, Streete argues, "for most of the church fathers from the second to the fifth centuries, Thecla's main function was as a martyr who was willing to defend the virtue they valued—chastity—to the death" (94–95). Like Perpetua, Thecla is re-written to conform to her audience's expectations of gender roles.

The final chapter, "Why Martyrs Matter," is perhaps the most important and the most challenging section of Streete's book. Reflecting on the

stories of Columbine High School "martyrs" Cassie Bernall and Rachel Scott, as well as the phenomenon of Palestinian "female suicide attackers" (Streete prefers this term to "terrorist" or "martyr"), Streete observes that these modern events, like the ancient tales of Perpetua and Thecla, place the bodies of young women in the spotlight as blank slates upon which society imposes discussions of societal roles, familial values, and gender. Like the ancient martyrs, Streete suggests that these modern women are left to the mercy of their interpreting audiences, and "the martyr herself, now dead, has been absorbed by a cause that does not advance gender empowerment, however that is envisioned, for the living" (121).

Though Streete's argument for the vital role of an audience for the interpretation of martyrdom is convincing, her argument assumes that the pursuit of martyrdom or asceticism alone lacks meaning in itself. Streete suggests that it is an audience who ultimately distinguishes between "suicides" and "martyrdoms," but this suggestion has the consequence of removing the victim's own voice. Thus, insofar as Streete insists on the presence of an interpretative audience, she commits the same error of which she accuses early male interpreters: denying the martyr her say in the meaning of her death.

In spite of this minor critique, however, *Redeemed Bodies* is a fascinating read for anyone interested in issues of martyrdom and gender. Streete's use of accessible language makes the book approachable for laity, and her extensive endnotes and bibliography provide ample resources for scholars wishing to pursue her arguments in greater detail. Overall, this book makes a significant contribution to the understanding of gender and martyrdom in early Christianity.

MELANIE HOWARD
PRINCETON THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

Women in the World of the Earliest Christians: Illuminating Ancient Ways of Life. By Lynn H. Cohick. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2009, 327 pages.

Lynn H. Cohick is an associate professor of New Testament at Wheaton (Ill.) College and Graduate School. Her Ph.D. from the University of Pennsylvania in New Testament/Christian Origins, together with previously

published work on Second Temple Jewish life, make her ideally positioned to discuss the lives of women—gentile, Jewish, and Christian (a burgeoning and porous category in the period under discussion)—in the Roman Empire. Cohick's fundamental aim is to provide an accurate picture of the lives of women in the days of the early "Christian" (cf. Cohick's gloss of the term [28]) movement; this, she thinks, is necessary to undergird any present-day dialogue about women's place in church, synagogue, or society (327).

The basic structure by which Cohick has organized her book into chapters mimics a woman's progression through life: birth and daughterhood, marriage, motherhood, religious life, work (with a special chapter on female slaves and prostitutes), and benefaction. These divisions provide means of comparison between gentile and Jewish practices, together with Christianity's developing third way, as they are treated together within the same chapters. Exemplary anecdotes can range from a one-line epigraph to lengthy and detailed accounts from legal or historical records. Likewise, Cohick's analyses vary in length and thoroughness, as necessary.

The division according to life-sequence demonstrates the commonalities among all classes and religions of women, like the inherent dangers of childbearing in the ancient world. Many of Cohick's examples reinforce a recurrent theme in her study: where there are differences between women's experiences, social status and wealth are often more influential than religion (cf. 323). There are, however, cases in which there is significant divergence in practice or ideology between one religious group and another: e.g., infanticide/exposure of newborns (35–42), endogamy and polygamy (81–3), or the sexual availability of female slaves (260–63, 275–82). In these instances, Cohick provides a more thorough analysis and comparison.

One of Cohick's central aims is to illumine the ideals promoted for and imposed on women (primarily found in literary sources) while providing examples of the exceptions (evidenced most plainly, in her estimation, in epistolary and epigraphic sources). In the realm of marriage, for instance, a survey of the cultural prescriptions for women's roles (ch. 2, "Marriage and Matron Ideals") is followed by a more complex collage of the legal issues—e.g., dowries, property-ownership, divorce—and potential degrees

of independence married women might have experienced (ch. 3, "Wives and the Realities of Marriage").

The organizational logic is a good one, but carries with it some detractions. The main disadvantage is that chronology of sources becomes entirely jumbled within the thematic treatments. One egregious instance is found in the chapter on Motherhood (ch. 4): the examples of maternal grief at the loss of a child—(1) an anecdote in a letter of Pliny the Younger (2nd C. C.E.), (2) a story from 2 Maccabees (ca. 1st C. B.C.E.) concerning a Jewish mother whose seven sons were martyred, and (3) an injunction from Seneca (1st C. C.E.) deriding immoderation in weeping—demonstrate no temporal, generic, or socio-cultural order whatsoever (140–43). Certainly, there are drawbacks to *any* structure imposed on unruly and diverse data, but the weaknesses of Cohick's chosen systematization could have been mitigated by a clear ordering of dates within her broader categories of women's life situations/spheres and their subsections.

A significant strength of the book is its accessibility. Although she employs technical vocabulary, Cohick ensures that explanation and education accompanies every complex concept or term. For example, while most of her readers will have heard of the Dead Sea Scrolls, Cohick provides just enough background to ensure readers can make sense of her more detailed observations (199). In another instance, she prefaces ch. 5 ("Religious Activities of Gentile Women and God-Fearers") by explaining a lack of stark division between *sacred* and *secular* in the Greco-Roman worldview, which helps readers make sense of Cicero's rhetorical references to the Bona Dea cult as a political tool (169–72). Her lucid explanation of the interplay of patronage and honor/shame in Greco-Roman culture (ch. 9) could serve as a general introduction to the theme beyond the question of women's experience. In this section, she offers this pithy summary: "If patronage oiled the social wheels, then the honor/shame culture served as the engine that moved society along" (289).

Cohick's straightforward introduction of potentially shocking matters further aids modern readers. Instead of sidestepping the discomfiting details of infant exposure, or employing verbal apologetics for different degrees of sentimentality about childbearing and motherhood, Cohick pro-

ceeds directly with explanations and illustrations of ancient practices that elucidate their rationale, foreign though they may seem.

In contrast to Cohick's typical forthrightness, this reviewer noticed a difference in Cohick's prose—and perhaps her comfort level—in the programmatic and methodological introduction (19–32). Unlike her directness in subject-driven chapters, Cohick's writing in the introduction has a tendency to default to the passive voice, thus muting her claims. For example, she overtly avoids making any claims on her study's impact on theological questions like women's ordination, leaving it to "church polity makers" (21). (That an author of a descriptive study on a particular historical period should refrain from modern-day prescriptive conclusions is not uncommon, of course, but too much protestation hints at unspoken conflicts about the debate.) She also tries, it seems, not to offend any side of the academic or ecclesial spectrum in her careful explanation of terms and methods. This equivocation may merely confuse readers as she vacillates between reminders of the genre-cloaked, masculine-perspective-driven source material, on the one hand, and extolling the possibility of accessing the real experiences of regular women, on the other.

On the whole, however, Cohick exhibits confidence as she deftly weaves together multiple, diverse examples for each successive subject relating to women's lives. In organizing and describing the materials themselves, she demonstrates considerable erudition and skillful assessment of complex subjects. It is perhaps telling that Cohick's own social location inhibits her from being quite as creative or persuasive in her readings of NT texts as she is of Jewish or Roman sources.

Throughout, Cohick's interaction with secondary sources demonstrates her acquaintance with leading scholars in the study of women's lives within the respective scholarly fields her work covers, including Classics, Second Temple Judaism, and Early Christianity. Because of its broad scope, Cohick's study cannot supplant standard, specialized treatments, or sourcebooks that grant access to primary source materials. Nonetheless, Cohick's work is a rich compendium of examples from ancient sources, literary and non-literary. The layperson, student, and professional scholar alike will find a rich resource in her collection of primary source anecdotes, whether for filling out a picture of women in the Greco-Roman period, col-

orful lecture illustrations, or a jumping-off-point for more detailed study of primary source material. Cohick proves herself a cautious and thorough guide along the journey.

KARA J. LYONS-PARDUE
PRINCETON THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

The Deliverance of God: An Apocalyptic Rereading of Justification in Paul. By Douglas A. Campbell. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2009, 1,218 pages.

Douglas Campbell, associate professor of New Testament at Duke Divinity School, has written what he dubs is "clearly a long book . . . that . . . is far too short" (xxviii). While the reader might find 1,218 pages more than a little daunting (and this reader certainly did!), Campbell explains that the book aims at breaking new ground in Pauline studies by offering a comprehensive argument that tackles a myriad of complex interpretative issues surrounding the ongoing debate over justification. Campbell cites the Lutheran reading of Paul, negative misconstruals of Second Temple Judaism in Paul's day, and disputes over the why and when of Paul's composition of Romans as three classical Pauline interpretive "conundrums" that are each a result of a much larger problem—namely, the individualist, rationalist, modernist readings of Paul's justification texts, which interpret salvation along conditional and contractual lines. Campbell, who is after a "more theologically constructive Paul, along with a rather more christocentric apostolic gospel," desires to topple such a destructive reading in order to allow Paul to address us more successfully (8).

To this colossal end, the book is constructed of five parts: Justification Theory, and Its Implications; Some Hermeneutical Clarifications; The Conventional Reading, and Its Problems; A Rhetorical and Apocalyptic Rereading; and Rereading the Heartland. As might be deduced, it is not until parts four and five that Campbell begins to offer his own rereading, first of Romans 1–4 and then of the rest of Romans, Galatians, and important passages in other undisputed Pauline letters. To jump immediately into exegesis would be suicide according to Campbell, who avers that all the theoretical, church-historical, paradigmatic, ideological, and cultural

interpretative problems that result from the individual, conditional, and contractual reading of Paul's justification texts must first be "outed" and brought down. Hence, the first 467 pages (parts one through three) are filled with a highly complex reconstruction of "the" Justification theory (hereafter "JT") and its problems, hermeneutical assumptions, and pervasiveness in conventional readings of Paul (basically every reading of Paul until Campbell's).

Highly rational in his approach, Campbell clearly regards list-making as a most persuasive tool and (too) frequently employs it to highlight his building case against JT. After noting seven intrinsic difficulties in JT, Campbell argues that there are ten even larger systematic difficulties that put the conventional reading of Romans 1–4 at odds with Paul's apocalyptic theology in Romans 5–8 and four serious empirical problems regarding the true reality of Judaism and conversion. He then names nineteen "clusters of interpretative concern" that stem from JT's contractual soteriology: six major concerns of Pauline interpreters, six broader concerns over JT's characterization of the pre-Christian state, and seven big-picture concerns with the resulting version of Christianity generally. Moving to his portrayal of the conventional reading of Romans 1–4, Campbell next cites no fewer than thirty-five exegetical problems consisting of eleven underdeterminations, in which the textual data fails to deliver what JT needs to support it, and twenty-four overdeterminations, in which the textual data offers information JT does not need, "ranging from the mildly puzzling to the profoundling embarrassing" (397). All thirty-five exegetical problems are then shown to be the impetus behind the prior twenty-one intrinsic, systematic, and empirical difficulties embedded in or deriving from JT.

Campbell turns, in chapter 12, to detailed engagement with what he considers to be the most outstanding revisionist readings of Romans 1–4 in the last thirty years as provided by James Dunn, E. P. Sanders, Stanley Stowers, and Francis Watson. Campbell's work here is quite thorough and showcases well his massive knowledge of the field, its players, and key issues. Ultimately, Campbell dismisses each of these "stellar figures" as failing in their rereadings and surmises from these that "it is unlikely that others will have succeeded" (413). Setting himself up nicely for his own rereading in parts four and five, Campbell announces JT's reading of

Romans 1–4 to be vulnerable but "at present simply *the least worst alternative*" (466).

Laying groundwork for the rhetorical and apocalyptic rereading he will give to Romans 1–4, Campbell next weighs in on "the Romans debate," concluding that the letter was written for the same reason Galatians was ("to defend Paul's gospel against the depredations of certain hostile countermissionaries") (495). Ultimately, relying heavily on Romans 16:17–20 for historical support, Campbell decides, "Paul will turn out to focus much of Romans on a single Teacher . . . a Jewish Christian" (506). This allows for a description of Paul as shifting between three tasks in Romans: "expounding his own position, responding to assumed criticisms of that, and then going over onto the offensive, attacking various assertions by his opponent" (508). It is an ingenious move that affords a transfer of the unsavory parts of Romans 1–4 onto the docket of the Teacher's gospel rather than Paul's. The rhetorical device Campbell suggests Paul implemented in his debate against the Teacher's non-gospel is that of *speech-in-character*. Romans 1:18–32, for instance, "reproduces compactly the opening rhetorical gambit of the Teacher," as Paul speaks in the voice of the Teacher in order to later dismantle the Teacher's solution to the supposed problem contained in 1:18–32 (528).

Campbell's move here and elsewhere in his rereading of Romans 1:18–3:20 is motivated theologically by two main contentions. The first concerns two different conceptions of God at stake—Paul's benevolent God and the Teacher's retributively just God. The second contention is whether or not Jews and pagans are ontologically and ethically different. By the time Campbell makes a case for his unique rereading of 1:18–3:20 as Paul's debate with the Teacher, he claims to have solved twenty-six out of the fifty-six interpretative problems with JT's conventional reading. Notably missing from Campbell's theologizing, however, is any sense that God's wrath could serve God's ultimately benevolent purposes, such as in God justifying God's own self. With Romans 1:18–32 consigned wholly to the Teacher's gospel, however, it is plain to see why Campbell's account is lacking here. Paul's threefold repetition of God's "handing over" in 1:24, 26, and 28 seems replete with apocalyptic imagery that matches well what

is to come in Romans 5–8, especially 8:32, yet Campbell will have none of it.

Positively, Campbell reads Romans 1:16–17 and 3:21–31 christocentrically, landing strongly on the side of the subjective genitive interpretation of Paul's *pistis christou* construction, and apocalyptically, emphasizing the righteousness of God as God's liberating act of love to set humanity free. He does not shy away from Paul's understanding of the atonement, but rather sees intertextual linkage in 3:21–26 to the martyrological story of Genesis 22, bolstering his claim that Paul's God is one of "benevolence . . . as the beloved son is offered up to save a hostile humanity" (655). This forensic-liberative understanding is contrasted to JT's (and the Teacher's) forensic-retributive one with the noted advantage of better anticipating Paul's theology in Romans 5–8. God justifies the ungodly, revealing God's character to be "deeply loving," by releasing them, in Christ, from their ontological prison (669).

Demonstrating just how much of his rereading rests on a historical reconstruction of "the Teacher," Campbell proffers that Romans 3:27–4:25 is the second argument Paul mounts against the Teacher, this time referencing the Torah and its patriarch, Abraham. Campbell's intention is to destroy the notion that Romans 4 is a key text for JT, proving it instead "to be one of its vulnerabilities—a tower vulnerable to total collapse, along with the citadel that it defends" (715). To this end, Campbell builds a careful case for a thick (vs. a thin) reading of the analogy between Abraham and Christians. Whereas a thin reading sees the analogy in the form of Christians copying Abraham's trust, Campbell argues for taking "a cue from the christocentric material that brackets Paul's exegesis of Abraham in 3:27–31 . . . and 4:24b–25, not to mention 3:21–22" (753). The take-home for so doing is a three-member analogy. Christ's fidelity shapes Abraham's trust in God just as it generates Christians' participatory faith. Faith, rather than being characterized as an individual's belief in propositions, is here apocalyptically recast as a gift both revealed and unconditional.

Without a doubt, Campbell has offered a compelling case at many points, most especially in his christocentric rereadings of Romans 3 and 4. Regardless of whether one agrees or disagrees with the book's overarching argument, there are dozens upon dozens of Campbell's finer points with

which the reader must grapple. Campbell concludes by calling JT advocates to account and warns that the time is past for "mere dismissal" (935). Not wanting to dismiss Campbell's monumental work, a word of caution still seems in order. Campbell's reconstruction and deconstruction of JT is so massive, it is not clear whether anyone will shuffle forward and take ownership. Put plainly, with the push for argumentative cohesion at every point and a desire to pile just about every sin committed within Pauline interpretation at the feet JT, one is left to wonder whether Campbell might be its only true advocate. It is clearly pivotal to the book's argument, analogous perhaps of the suggestion that Romans is Paul's rhetorical argument against the Teacher. Yet the historical leap required to swallow Campbell's case for the Teacher seems to be just as wide as that required for the existence of JT.

At the end of the day, Campbell's scholarship, constructed as it is, is one best left for the experts. Catching title aside, it is not a work well suited for undergraduates or even seminarians, and its appeal across interdisciplinary lines is tenuous at best. Yet for those who yearn to hear Paul in ever-new ways, this study promises to deliver.

SHANNON NICOLE SMYTHE
PRINCETON THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

The Goodly Fellowship of the Prophets: The Achievement of Association in Canon Formation. By Christopher R. Seitz. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2009, 136 pages.

Having written several books on the theology of the Former Prophets, it can hardly be said that Christopher Seitz is a stranger to the prophetic corpus. It should therefore come as no surprise that in his latest book, *The Goodly Fellowship of the Prophets*, Seitz again focuses on the prophets. With that said, his work here differs considerably from what he has done before. In contrast to his previous work on Isaiah and Jeremiah, Seitz is not so much concerned with the content or message of a particular prophetic book as he is with its placement/position in the biblical canon.

At first glance, it might appear that Seitz's work easily falls under the category of canonical studies/criticism. Yet, as Seitz himself notes, his

agenda is different than that of other scholars dealing with the Old Testament canon. Though traditional canonical criticism has focused largely on the selection/inclusion of some books versus the exclusion of others, this subject is largely irrelevant to Seitz. He is less interested in what books were and were not included in the Old Testament and more interested in the order of the books that make up the Old Testament canon. He seeks to address the larger question of whether there is any theological significance in the ordering of the canon and in the location of certain canonical books in particular.

Seitz focuses on the writings of the Minor Prophets or book of the Twelve about which he makes several claims. First, he contends that the book of the Twelve represents an ordered collection. For Seitz, this ordering happened very early in the editing of the prophetic corpus (basically when the last book in the collection was completed). Second, Seitz argues that the Twelve, along with the Torah/Law, served as the key grammar of the Old Testament for the community of Israel. Third, for the early church the Torah and the Twelve articulated the gospel of Jesus Christ in "promise, prophecy, and figural anticipation" (48).

In his second chapter, Seitz lays forth the evidence in favor of his argument, noting various problems with the understanding of canon both within the church and in the field of biblical scholarship. Seitz is especially antagonistic towards the traditional fourfold order used by the church (though he never actually defines what this order is, he seems to mean the Pentateuch, Historical Books, Former, and Latter Prophets). For Seitz, the fourfold order downplays the importance of the prophetic corpus and, more specifically, the achievement of the book of the Twelve by adding other books from the Writings to it, such as Lamentations and Daniel. Furthermore, it separates the Torah from the Prophets. Seitz instead prefers the tripartite order found in Jewish bibles (Torah, Prophets, and Writings, and he praises scholars such as Childs who use this order in their study of the Old Testament canon.

Turning to the work of biblical scholars, Seitz goes on to lambaste the distinction between scripture and canon advocated by such scholars as James Barr and John Barton. The former term has been traditionally understood by scholars as referring to books having varying degrees of au-

thority within the community of Israel, whether these were later included in the Hebrew canon or not, while the latter term has been taken as referring to a late and external decision to close the list of biblical books. Seitz argues that this is an erroneous dichotomy and instead suggests the possibility of stabilization *before* closure meaning that certain books or sections of the bible were deemed authoritative before the canon was officially closed. For Seitz, there is ample evidence that the book of the Twelve was considered authoritative from a very early period. He notes theological connections between the books themselves (86, 91), suggesting that they were meant to be taken/read together. As he puts it, the prophetic books in this collection speak "both as twelve and as one" (88).

Perhaps most interesting is the evidence Seitz gives not from the book of the Twelve itself but from this book's relation with other sections of the biblical canon, more specifically the Writings/Ketuvim. He argues that as a collection the Writings, in comparison with the Twelve, have a much less obvious relation to one another. Whereas the Minor Prophets are connected to each other through their themes and content, the Writings, according to Seitz, are not linked to one another but themselves point to the other two sections of the Old Testament. As he puts it, "the Writings function in specific relationship to, and with specific authority grounded in, the Law and Prophets" (55–56). This explains why the Writings are not mentioned as a separate category in the New Testament. For Seitz, this serves as a corrective to traditional views since earlier scholarship inferred, from this lack of mention, that the Old Testament canon was largely unstable and fluctuating during the early Christian era.

The Goodly Fellowship of the Prophets is a significant contribution to a largely overlooked subject. Seitz's work forces the reader to consider not just what we have in the biblical canon but how we have it. I do think Seitz could have further elaborated some of the more thought-provoking points he makes throughout the book. For example, he briefly notes the parallels between the order of the Twelve and the order of the letters in the Pauline corpus as an example of how the Law and Prophets pattern of the Old Testament influenced the structure of the New, but does not discuss this issue further. A more detailed examination of this parallel might have helped to strengthen his argument. Also, Seitz at times goes off on a tangent in his

criticism of various scholars and as a result seems to forget the point that he originally made.

With that said, Seitz's book suggests a key issue for the contemporary church to consider. He does an excellent job of pointing out, correctly in my opinion, that our view towards the order of the canon has implications for how we view the Bible. If one understands the Old Testament canon as a loose and fluctuating collection of books during the time in which the New Testament was composed, one might have a very subordinate view of it. In the end, Seitz desires both the church and the scholarly community to steer away from an essentially Marcionite view of the Old Testament that sees it as less important than or even irrelevant to the New. In this respect, his book is useful for the Church to be reminded of its heritage as found in the message of the Old Testament.

ADAM OLIVER STOKES
PRINCETON THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

The Trial Narratives: Conflict, Power, and Identity in the New Testament. By Matthew L. Skinner. Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2010, 210 pages.

Matthew Skinner is Associate Professor of New Testament at Luther Seminary in St. Paul. His previous work focused on Paul's custody and trial scenes in Acts 21–28 (*Locating Paul: Places of Custody as Narrative Settings in Acts 21–28*, 2003), and *The Trial Narratives* is something of an extension of that work. *The Trial Narratives*, though, takes a much more ambitious swath of material, i.e., the various trial scenes throughout the Gospels and Acts. It also takes into account a variety of interpretive foci and applies these foci across a particular narrative type-scene. Skinner's primary aim is to show that these scenes each consist of "subtle yet powerful demonstrations of the claims that the gospel makes on and about the world, its religious assumptions, and its expressions of power" (5). The result is an engaging and surprisingly relevant exploration of trial scenes

that manages to address even-handedly both theological and sociopolitical facets.

In the first chapter, Skinner introduces the importance of trials in the collective imagination of societies ancient and modern. He frames them not only as an arena in which individuals are judged, but also as a setting for the evaluation of societal values. In the trial scenes of the NT, authors utilize this type-scene cunningly: even as Jesus, his followers, and their message are put on trial, the gospel often delivers judgments on the values of the Roman Empire and the Judean aristocracy (3). In this way, the NT's trial scenes become grounds for weighing competing claims of authority and challenging social norms. The chapter also outlines Skinner's criteria for NT trial scenes and his method for examining them. Skinner relies on a blend of literary, socio-historical, and theological methods to argue his case.

The second chapter sketches the role of trials in ancient life and literature. In particular, Skinner points out the highly political nature of trials and that the legal system in the Greco-Roman world often favored the elite. He also highlights the ways ancient novels used the trial scene to subvert the dominant values of the society, even as the earliest Christian narratives would do.

Investigations of the various trial scenes in the NT proceed thus: Mark, Matthew, Luke, and John, followed by three chapters on Acts, exploring 4–8, 16–17, and 21–28. His chapters on Jesus' trial in the Gospels highlight each Gospel's unique contributions to a reader's understanding of the event. Skinner makes sure to situate the Gospel scenes in their particular literary contexts, which differentiate one version from another. Luke's trial scene, for example, portrays the interplay between human activity and the fulfillment of God's will in Jesus's arrest and crucifixion, while Matthew addresses the Jewish authorities' moral bankruptcy, and John's version stresses Jesus's enthronement through humiliation. His attention in these scenes often goes to the complex socio-political structures that various characters must navigate, and how Jesus's words (or silence) challenge these structures and their values.

The chapters on Acts explore a greater variety of scenes, allowing a more thorough treatment of the unique aspects of each scene. A building

case for Skinner's thesis mounts as the gospel in each scene challenges sociopolitical values and makes a claim on the world. More so than the Gospels, the trials in Acts carry a much stronger sense of dramatic reversal in terms of the trial scene, as accusers frequently become the accused, while the disciples and Paul transform from defendants to witnesses.

This book shows many admirable traits. Skinner's simultaneous focus on theological and sociopolitical issues treats each appropriately, and he often reminds readers that such issues always interact with one another. Also, his chapter on the role of trials in ancient and modern times is filled with insight. That Skinner explores four very similar scenes in the Gospels without simply repeating himself furthermore elevates the book's quality.

There are, however, some problems with this book. In a number of places, Skinner's attention to sociopolitical background tends to dominate his exegesis, and his re-narration of a scene in this idiom occasionally feels forced. For example, in the maneuverings between Pilate and the Judean authorities in the Gospels, Skinner speaks of Pilate's motivations as if they were easily discernible and uncontested. While Skinner's treatments are often persuasive, they can feel too heavy-handed in this respect. Also, while he notes in the introduction that his method may produce insights not apparent to first-century readers, in later chapters it becomes difficult to distinguish between what Skinner thinks the authors intended and what insights appear only for modern readers.

A surprising weakness of the book relates, ironically, to the passage primarily in view in Skinner's first book, Acts 21–28. This chapter's brevity, while in line with the length of the others, fails to provide Skinner with enough space to deal adequately with these eight chapters. This chapter's treatment thus feels rushed, and amounts to little more than a brief retelling of the scenes, albeit from Skinner's particular view.

Such minor matters aside, though, *The Trial Narratives* deserves the attention of anyone working on trial scenes of the NT, whether focusing on those passages which Skinner studies, or those (like John 9) which share only family resemblances. The book also contributes to the growing number of studies regarding the interaction between the gospel and Empire, and successfully engages this interaction without ignoring equally important issues of theological content or literary concerns. Skinner's exegetical

skill furthermore contributes to the value of this work for all students of Christian scripture.

In his introduction, Skinner makes clear for whom the book was written: "undergraduate and graduate students engaged in critical study of the New Testament and its ethical and theological claims," and for readers among clergy and laity interested in the theological claims of the Gospels and Acts (12). The book certainly fulfills its aim in this respect. Its value, though, should not be underestimated for scholarly audiences. Skinner makes exegetical and historical claims throughout that could serve as excellent starting point for deeper research into any one of these trial scenes, and his engagement with both theology and empire is a model for scholars interested in such issues.

JASON STURDEVANT
PRINCETON THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

Maranatha: Women's Funerary Rituals and Christian Origins. By Kathleen E. Corley. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2010, 262 pages.

As scholars have questioned and generally debunked the once monolithic narrative of Christian origins, many new explanations for the development of Christian belief and practice have been offered in its place. Many of these explanations focus on sociological features of Greco-Roman culture and the ways that these social factors provide more nuanced readings of biblical and non-biblical Christian texts. In the present volume, Kathleen E. Corley, who is an associate professor of religious studies at the University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh and member of the Jesus Seminar, offers an explanation of Christian origins that fits well with these other recent sociological models. Corley asserts that the funerary practices of women in the Greco-Roman world provide the proper context for understanding the development of several key ritual practices and beliefs of the cult that would eventually remember Jesus as the resurrected Christ.

In the opening chapter, Corley briefly makes the case for Greco-Roman club and association practices as the key to understanding gatherings of early Christian communities, and this background provides her point of entry: women's funerary practices, like communal meals of clubs, were

fairly well established in the ancient world and can also provide a window into early Christian practice. In the following chapter, Corley describes the funerary practices of women in ancient Greece and Rome. In particular, she focuses on the role of lament by women in the ritual cults of gods and heroes and noble death scenes. Having set the Greco-Roman context, Corely continues by describing funerary practices of Jewish and early Christian communities with special attention to the ways that the descriptions of these practices are Hellenized to meet cultural and social expectations. As such, the stereotypes of women in funerary practices are also a major focus of this chapter, from the 'feminine' emotional outbursts of grief to practices of magic and necromancy. In effect, this chapter serves as a framework for the Greco-Roman expectations of women in the preparation, burial, and continued memory enacted through ritual practice of lament for the deceased.

In the next two chapters, Corley moves to the discussion of meals within early Christian texts. In Chapter 3, Corley addresses meals celebrating the kingdom of God and the presence of Jesus, and in Chapter 4 she turns to the Eucharist and meals for the dead. In each chapter, Corley pays special attention to the roles of women at these meals in comparison with the expected practices of Greco-Roman culture discussed in the previous chapters and finds both expected and surprising patterns of behavior. In the first of these chapters, Corley highlights the fact that the role of women in these texts fits well with the theme of the reversal of social expectations that accompany the eschatological feasts hosted by God. In the latter chapter, Corley finds Eucharistic echoes within the meal stories that include women and argues that this is evidence of the role of women in the creative process of Christian myth making. Throughout these chapters, Corley carefully accentuates both the good and the bad in the depiction of women within early Christian writings. She notes the peculiar and positive ways that women are remembered and included in the narratives when they exist, but she also deftly highlights the absence of women when they are intentionally neglected, particularly in the case of the Lord's Supper institution narratives.

The fifth and final chapter is where Corley is most creative and provocative: she argues that the "raised on the third day" tradition associated

with Jesus's resurrection can be explained by the expectations for lament of women in antiquity. That it is women who go to visit the tomb on the third day is not surprising. This is what we would expect based on cultural practices throughout the Mediterranean world. What is surprising is the way that this typical and expected activity is used in the biblical narrative to marginalize the women who find only an empty tomb over and against the men who see (and touch!) physical manifestations of Jesus. Essentially, Corley argues that the empty tomb tradition was inherently apologetic. The (male) authors of the gospel traditions did not want Jesus's resurrection to be associated with the possible accusation of female necromancy and magic stereotypically associated with female actions of lament. In other words, in terms of the development of the resurrection tradition, it was important for the narrative to include a temporal element that would disassociate Jesus's resurrection from any feminine-supernatural activity, and because it would be expected for women to visit the tomb on the third day, it was necessary to depict Jesus as resurrected on the third day *before* the women arrived. Beyond this re-imagination of the origins of the third-day tradition, Corley also argues in this chapter for viewing ordinary and expected lament practices of women as the origin of the oral tradition behind the gospel passion narratives.

Overall, Corley presents a coherent and compelling argument for the role of female lament practices within the formation of early Christian traditions about Jesus. The chapters discussing the Greco-Roman context for women's funerary and lament behaviors are illuminating for understanding various aspects of the depiction of women in early Christian texts. Moreover, Corley's suggestion that such practices formed the core of the oral tradition behind the passion narratives offers a plausible explanation for the remarkable consistency (and even some of the inconsistencies) of the gospel traditions. Finally, the suggestion that the third-day tradition was based in apologetic reasons for the marginalization of women is a creative, but imaginable, explanation for that particular strand of the narrative. However, Corley's conclusion seems to suggest that *every* post-resurrection appearance story was composed for the purpose of excluding women (132), and this detracts from other plausible explanations for their composition. This is not to imply that the exclusion of women was not part

of the narrative substructure, because women are clearly excluded from these stories, but simply to suggest that the exclusion of women was not the only, or even primary, reason for the composition of all the appearance stories (e.g., the Emmaus narrative). Students and scholars of NT and Christian origins will find this volume to be an engaging study that invites a reconsideration of the spread of Christianity.

J. EDWARD WALTERS
PRINCETON THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

Participation in Christ: An Entry into Karl Barth's Church Dogmatics. By Adam Neder. Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2009, 135 pages.

The Columbia Series in Reformed Theology intends a broad audience from scholar to layperson. Neder admirably attempts such breadth. For the uninitiated, Neder explicates a ubiquitous theme in the *Church Dogmatics* in a crisp 92 pages of prose, along the way translating the abstraction 'participation in Christ' into concrete spiritual praxis tastefully described as Barth's "extrinsically oriented spirituality of the Word of God" (37). But Neder writes with another audience in mind. The book's underlying depth, given in the footnotes and the interlocutors encountered there, reveals the book's scholarly burden. Neder is mounting an apologetic, defending Barth against a recurrent criticism.

The criticism typically runs like this: Barth's Christocentrism—the claim that in the history of Jesus Christ both divine and human essence are given their actual determination—is a covert Christomonism in which Christ's human agency overdetermines and so excludes genuine human agency. We have nothing to add to what God does in Jesus Christ.

Neder tells a different story. Yes, Barth is decidedly Christocentric. Neder summarizes Barth's doctrine of election in *CD* II/2: "Jesus Christ encloses (*beschlossen*) the existence and history of humanity within himself" (17). But the relation established in this enclosure is neither additive or exclusive, but participatory and inclusive. Hence, Neder's master thesis: "Barth's doctrine of election and his Christology do not smother genuine human action, but ground and elicit it" (70).

How does Neder defend it? Judging by his method of working through the *Church Dogmatics*, a chapter per volume, the primary burden of the book seems to be the more preliminary apologetic goal of justifying that human agency is a concern *at all* for Barth. This is certainly worthwhile. Neder ably corrects the impression that Barth's account of human participation in Christ "arise[s] out of thin air" (xii) in the latter parts of *CD* IV as a late nod toward human agency, a kind of compensation for the earlier claims about election. Neder's exegesis cements the judgment that participation in Christ is an abiding dogmatic concern for Barth and can even serve as an entryway into the *Church Dogmatics*.

While Neder capably defends Barth's authorial intentions, does his reading demonstrate to critics that Barth actually articulates a satisfying account of human agency? Barth's ordered account of divine and human agency emerges piecemeal as Neder moves forward. The primary conceptual convention to be grasped is Barth's distinction between *de jure* (objective) and *de facto* (subjective) participation in Christ. They form two aspects of a singular event. *De jure*: In the death and resurrection of Jesus, sinful humanity is put to death and then raised anew, sanctified and obedient. This is "a substitutionary reality" taken place on our behalf (23). In Christ, humanity is objectively predetermined as obedient. *De facto*: This is the other side of the coin, whereby humans come to actively confirm and repeat in their subjective existence the determination God has already established for them in Jesus Christ. How do they relate? Neder is clear. The relation between aspects is teleological. This is perhaps the most valuable insight of the study for critics of Barth. "The objective inclusion of humanity in Jesus Christ is not the end of the story, but the beginning. It is the establishment and anticipation of the end, but not the end itself" (47). Humanity's objective predetermination is proleptic in character, establishing human action as teleologically ordered to the end of obedient fellowship with God. Thus, when what God has done *on our behalf* in Jesus Christ is proclaimed, it does not entail the cancellation of our responsibility, but comes to us as an urgent call and summons us to realize precisely who we are destined to be, to self-determine in accordance with our ends.

Barth thus retains the existentialism of his earlier theology but now "located within an objective framework" (47). The *de facto* shape of human

being and agency in Christ is one of historical-covenantal self-transcendence. The Word of God continually interrupts the limitations of humanity's sinful state, setting it within a new relationship with a new *telos*. In the history of such confrontation, human existence comes to realize its destiny (Neder's section 'Being and History', treating *CD* III/2, §44.3, is especially rich in description here).

As chapter 5 makes explicit, the 'key' to all this is not phenomenal reflection, but Barth's actualistic Christology. Jesus Christ is constituted as a subject in the single history of active confrontation and fellowship between the movement of the eternal Son of God to humanity and the corresponding movement of the Son of Man to God. The relation of these two dynamic actions is precisely ordered, a relation of ground and consequence: "the divine always gives and the human always receives responsively" (72). Human participation in Christ follows suit. The subjective movement from 'below to above,' the elevation from self-enclosed sinful existence to joyful obedience, is grounded and elicited by the prior movement from 'above to below,' the event of revelation.

This relation clarified, the only missing piece is an account of *how* exactly ground *effects* consequence. This is the first issue addressed in the conclusion, raised in relation to Barth's low view of the sacraments. Barth holds that "the Holy Spirit is the teleological power of this transition" (82) from *de jure* to *de facto* participation. The Spirit effects the transition directly without ecclesial mediation. Here is the deeper source of dissatisfaction with Barth's position on human agency: is this an *account* of how this transition happens or simply the assertion that it does? And we find that while Neder notes Barth's rationale on this matter, he too wonders aloud about the consistency of this position with the New Testament. Indeed, if faith comes from hearing (Rom. 10:17), if "union with Christ *happens* in revelation" (xiv) as Barth holds in *CD* I/1, should not the visible words of the sacraments and the prophetic gifts of the church assume a natural place in an account of this transition? And here one wishes Neder's apologetic carried more constructive force, but instead Neder quickly moves on to explore the implications of Barth's account in relation to the *simul* doctrine and then the Orthodox doctrine of *theosis*. Thus, what Neder finally leaves us with is a foundation. Dissatisfactions will still remain, but at least

any myths about Christomonism are dispelled as Barth's intentions and conventions have been made exceedingly clear. Anyone attempting critical, constructive, or ecumenical work on Barth in the areas above would be wise to start thinking and building here.

WILLIAM T. BARNETT
PRINCETON THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

The Triune God: Systematics/De Deo Trino: Pars systematica (1964), Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan, 12. By Bernard Lonergan. Translated by Michael G. Shields. Edited by Robert M. Doran and H. Daniel Monsour. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2007, xxiv + 823 pages.

The bulk of this book consists of Lonergan's "textbook" or "manual" on the systematic (synthetic) treatment of the Trinity, composed as Latin lectures delivered at the Gregorian University in Rome beginning in 1955, first published in 1964, and now available in English translation along with the addition of several related texts. Each text, except for one of the appendices, is printed with the Latin original facing the English. This volume is the first part of the two most recent releases in the Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan edited by the members of the Regis College (Toronto) Lonergan Research Institute. Its companion (volume 11), published in 2009, contains Lonergan's analytic treatment of the doctrine of the Trinity, *De Deo Trino: Pars dogmatica*, in which he treats the discovery of "the way to Nicaea." Those studying Lonergan will want to read the two volumes together.

It would be pointless to try to explain in detail the content of Lonergan's systematic treatise; broad strokes will have to suffice. Lonergan's goal in this treatise is simple, and precisely what we should expect from theological teachers: "merely to communicate and promote . . . an imperfect yet fruitful understanding" of the received mystery of the Trinity to his students; though in the late 50s and early 60s this of course meant with recourse to Vatican I (8–9). The pedagogical problem Lonergan perceived within the climate of neo-Scholasticism was that while his students were well versed in the language of the tradition and the details of the relations, operations, personal properties, attributes, and missions and other

such trinitarian *theologoumena*, they did not understand the significance of this theological heritage. Lonergan's goal was to cut through the neo-scholastic terminology and demonstrate that the apparent morass is actually a reflection on the insight that God is self-conscious in a dynamic way and that the human relationship with God is a participation in the divine consciousness and thus that the doctrine of the Trinity is central to the Christian life.

Lonergan approaches the doctrine of the Trinity strictly in terms of the psychological analogy, with frequent attention to Augustine and especially Thomas. His method is that of solving problems via the positing and answering of questions. The chief trinitarian problem/question is (in outline): (1) God cannot be from another. However, (2) the Son is from another, the Father, yet is truly God. (3) The Spirit is from the Father and the Son, but the Spirit is truly God, and yet God cannot be from another. So, (4) there must be a difference between the way the Spirit is "from another" and the way the Son is. But (5) there can be no difference in God (126ff). The remainder of Lonergan's self-described *opusculum* (!) (2, 10) is devoted to solving this problem. Put differently, Lonergan perceives the basic trinitarian question to be how to understand God as three distinct persons who exist in a single divine nature. His answer is that we must conceive of the divine processions by analogy to the Thomistic notion of intellectual emanation. Thus, the Spirit proceeds from the Father and Son as the Love of God for the Word and the Word's Love for the Speaker. The three divine processions share the same consciousness but each has this consciousness in a way distinct from the others. Lonergan's systematic presentation of the doctrine of the Trinity should be of interest to anyone working on this doctrine and especially to those who self-consciously work in the Augustinian and Thomistic tradition.

Briefly, it is worth noting for those who might wish to improve or simply exercise their Latin, these texts present the reader with relatively simple and straightforward Latin that is even mildly elegant. It is, as should be expected, a mixture of classical, medieval, and neo-Latin, but with a distinctly classical flair that is a delight to read.

Lonergan's impact on and relationship to Protestant theology is far less when considered in comparison to some of his contemporaries (e.g.,

De Lubac, Rahner, and von Balthasar, each of whom wrote in German or French), a fact that should surprise as Lonergan, a Canadian, wrote his later works in English. This is no doubt due in part to the fact that much of his work, especially the systematic and dogmatic works such as these, has long been accessible only in Latin or in unpublished English typescripts available solely at Lonergan centers and institutes. The publications of these texts in the Collected Works will without doubt enrich Lonergan studies; for example, a comparison of the first chapter on method with *Method in Theology* could prove especially insightful in terms of Lonergan's development. One hopes that these and forthcoming volumes of previously unavailable works will also encourage dialogue with Protestant theology.

To read this volume is to take a long trip into the strange old world of pre-Vatican II neo-Scholasticism. Contemporary Protestant readers, the majority of whom now have only ever experienced the Roman Church post-Vatican II, will no doubt be especially astonished and perhaps disorientated by the ride. The fact that Roman theology remains unsettled following Vatican II is obvious—to give but one example of the many possible—from the contemporary debate between the Dominicans and the defenders of the *Nouvelle Théologie* concerning the interpretation of Thomas in regard to nature and grace (e.g., Stephen Long, *Natura Pura*, and Thomas Joseph White, *Wisdom in the Face of Modernity*). In this light it is worth reflecting on just how recently the radical changes made at Vatican II occurred. If such neo-Scholasticism still reigned, the apparent increase of the *natatores tiberinum* who were once at home in the waters of the *flumina Tamesis* and *Albis* and *Lacus Lemans* would be trifling; reflection on just how recent and how radical the Vatican II reforms were should at least give pause to those contemplating the plunge: how quickly could the waters become murky and torrid again? Which is to leave aside entirely the question of whether the reforms were sufficient! But to end on such a note is not only to be unduly critical in light of the ecumenical promise of post-Vatican II developments, but unfair to the legacy of Bernard Lonergan, who was a stalwart defender of the Vatican II reforms.

Even in these earlier works Lonergan is no simple neo-Scholastic. He made use of the scholastic method and form in order to reform the narrow

conservative (dare we say oppressive) limitations of pre-Vatican II scholasticism. Lonergan sought to reform and open the mind of his Church by means of its own presuppositions, including that of the Latin textbook. And the reality of this reform is visible, among other places, in his later "monumental" works, *Method in Theology* and, of course, the modern classic that is *Insight*. Though the texts in this volume are now somewhat dated and many readers will no doubt take issue with this or that aspect of Lonergan's development of the mystery of the Trinity and/or his methodology, this book contains a rich trove of rigorous and meticulous theological work which is far from mere trivial or hair-splitting distinctions. Lonergan's systematic treatment of the Trinity is a model of the rigor required as we seek to understand the mystery of the Trinity. Contemporary theology, be it Roman, Protestant, or otherwise, would do well to recover some of the purified scholastic tools exemplified by Lonergan as we strive together to become catholic.

MATTHEW J. ARAGON BRUCE
PRINCETON THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

Atonement: The Person and Work of Christ. By Thomas F. Torrance. Edited by Robert T. Walker. Downers Grove, Ill: IVP Academic, 2009, lxxxiv + 489 pages.

Thomas F. Torrance is one of the giants in English Reformed theology. Throughout the latter-half of the twentieth century, and until his death in 2007, he was a distinguished church theologian notable for his ecumenical endeavors and his contributions to the dialogue between theology and science. He also served as Professor of Christian Dogmatics at New College, Edinburgh for twenty-seven years, and it was during these years that he gave the lectures on christology now published in two volumes, *Incarnation* (2008) and *Atonement* (2009). Torrance's nephew, Robert T. Walker, carefully edited both volumes and as with *Incarnation*, he provides a very long (49 pages) and detailed introduction to these lectures on Christ's atoning work.

As indicated by the subtitles for each volume, *Incarnation* focuses on the "person and life" of Christ, while *Atonement* discusses the "person and

work." The repetition of "person" indicates not only that these are to be read together, but it also gives the reader a helpful insight into Torrance's christology. Put simply, Torrance strongly opposes the traditional, scholastic separation between christology as the study of Christ's person and soteriology as the study of Christ's saving work. Against this, he insists that christology and soteriology belong together at all times. But contrary to those theologies which subsume the person into the work, Torrance makes the ontological, historical reality of Christ's person the center and basis for all theological reflection. In a key statement from *Atonement* that serves as a kind of summary of Torrance's theology, he writes: "We are not saved by the atoning death of Christ, far less by sacramental liturgical action, but by *Christ himself* who in his own person made atonement for us. *He is* the atonement who ever lives and ever intercedes for us. He is, in the identity of his person and work, priest and sacrifice in one. His *being* mediates his great redeeming work" (73).

The book is immediately distinguished from most treatments of the topic by a few crucial factors. First, Torrance rejects any attempt to identify a single "theory" of the atonement; he does not attempt to reconcile the various theories into a "super-theory." No theory is possible for the simple reason that "there is no logical relation, no formal rational continuity" that exists "between the death of Jesus . . . and the forgiveness of our sins today" (4). Second, Torrance's treatment of atonement is rooted in a careful exposition of the Old Testament concepts and themes and their connection to the New Testament witness to Christ. He makes this clear starting on the very first page, where he says that the New Testament language must be understood as the "fulfilment of the Old Testament patterns of understanding and worship provided within the covenant [with Israel]" (1). Third, much more so than *Incarnation*, *Atonement* constitutes a minor or partial dogmatics—at least, that is, a dogmatics of the second and third articles. In addition to christology and soteriology, it includes pneumatology, ecclesiology, and eschatology. For this reason, of the two volumes, *Atonement* is by far the more comprehensive in scope.

The book is composed of twelve chapters (with a concluding epilogue), and for the sake of analysis these chapters can be organized into four sections of three chapters each. The first section (chs. 1–3) explores the con-

nection between the OT and NT. Of all the many contributions Torrance makes to the understanding of the atonement in the book, this detailed and technical exploration of OT and NT themes is the most impressive. The first chapter focuses on the derivation of the word *berith* or "covenant," and shows how each of the possible etymological meanings is fulfilled in the new covenant in Christ. The second chapter examines the OT terms for redemption—*padah/pidyon*, *kipper/kopher*, and *gaal/goel*—in order to see the context for the NT discussion of redemption in Christ. In one of Torrance's most brilliant insights, he connects these OT terms to Christ's threefold office of king, priest, and prophet: *padah* refers to Christ's kingly work in the form of his active obedience; *kipper* refers to Christ's priestly work in his passive obedience; and *goel* refers to his prophetic work in his incarnational assumption of our humanity (60). The third chapter then explores the tensions between prophet and priest, word and liturgy, law and cult. Torrance connects these two elements, respectively, to the Mosaic and Aaronic aspects of priesthood in the OT, and then to Paul and Hebrews in the NT (72–74). Christ's priestly ministry is unique, he argues, in that Jesus resolves this tension in his decisively new work of atoning mediation as both the divine representative to humanity and the human representative to the divine.

The second section forms the essence of Torrance's theology of the atonement. In these three chapters, he explores the nature of atonement as justification (ch. 4), reconciliation (ch. 5), and redemption (ch. 6). Justification is God's decisively new act of judgment that graciously overcomes the law; reconciliation is the new relation of peace accomplished through Christ's substitutionary exchange; and redemption is the fulfillment of the covenant through the pentecostal work of the Spirit. Torrance understands justification and reconciliation to refer to "the completed and finished work of Christ" in terms of the aorist and perfect tenses, while redemption refers to that aspect of atonement which "is still outstanding or future, still to be fully and finally revealed or consummated" (174). Put differently, justification and reconciliation refer to the work of atonement accomplished in and through the assumed humanity of Christ, whereas redemption has in view the cosmic renewal of all things. Of these three chapters, the one on redemption is the most interesting. There he includes

the Spirit in the work of atonement and presents a devastating argument against limited atonement—accusing it of "rest[ing] upon a basic Nestorian heresy" (185)—while also rejecting universalism.

With these first two sections, the substance of Torrance's understanding of the atonement is complete. The second half of the book consists primarily of student handouts that Torrance distributed to his classes. They significantly augment the primary lecture materials by exploring everything from resurrection to eschatology. Much of this material has, however, appeared in print elsewhere. For example, the third section (chs. 7–9), as I have divided it here, is a nearly word-for-word reprint of seven out of the eight chapters of *Space, Time, and Resurrection*—minus the original footnotes, but with many additional headings. The original manuscript only had a five-page introduction to the resurrection (315n1), but the handouts constituting *Space, Time, and Resurrection* were added "with the author's blessing" (201). The changes mostly involve typographical alterations (e.g., removing unnecessary capitalization).

The final three chapters of *Atonement* fill out the "third article" of this mini-dogmatics. The tenth chapter focuses on the relation between Christ and the Spirit and the pentecostal creation of the apostolic testimony. This material was originally intended to be the second chapter of *Incarnation*, but due to overlapping content it was moved to this volume in order to help transition between the christology of the earlier chapters and the subsequent ecclesiology. Chapter eleven, on "The One Church of God in Jesus Christ," is another handout, but it has been abridged due to the fact that most of the handout was published as articles in *Scottish Journal of Theology*. The twelfth chapter is an abridgement of the "Eschatology Addendum" published in *Incarnation*, included here because the material was originally intended to be in *Atonement* and helps to round out the volume. The book concludes with an epilogue: a reprint of Torrance's essay on "The Reconciliation of Mind" originally published in the collection of essays honoring Thomas Gillespie, *Theology in the Service of the Church*.

Atonement is vintage Torrance. Many of his most cherished themes appear here in fine detail, especially the vicarious obedience of Christ. The volume is thematically linked to *The Mediation of Christ*, as the editor points out in the "Brief Guide to Further Reading" (448). Torrance either

explicitly or implicitly discusses Christ's reconciling representation of God to humanity and humanity to God on virtually every page. He employs the classical christological concepts of *anhypostasia* and *enhypostasia* to refer to the fact that the mediating work of Jesus Christ is both a wholly divine act of assumption (anhypostatic) and at the same time a wholly human act of obedience as the incarnate Son of God (enhypostatic).

While his analysis of the atonement is of a high quality throughout, Torrance is on shakier ground precisely where he is more creative. In addition to the brilliant though perhaps overly schematic connection between OT and NT mentioned above, Torrance presents a typology of atonement theories at the end of the second chapter that is a twist on Gustaf Aulén's famous typology (56–59). Torrance identifies three main types: (a) dramatic, which includes ransom and *Christus Victor*; (b) cultic-forensic, which includes cultic-sacrificial and penal-satisfaction theories; and (c) ontological, where he locates incarnational, mystical, and (strangely enough) moral influence. Torrance then maps these three types onto his *padah*, *kipper*, and *goel* aspects of atonement. Though he does not mention Aulén, Torrance critiques him for leaving out the cultic aspect. However, the attempt to connect each type to a Hebrew term is rather forced and leads to the effective eclipse of the moral or subjective dimension.

This plays itself out in the main theological dilemma that the book raises, namely, the relation between the objective and the subjective—a distinction which the author assumes is appropriate for the subject-matter. Torrance is at pains to stress that Christ's atoning work is both objective and subjective in nature, by which he means we find in Christ "not only the removal objectively of the obstacle to oneness of mind and will and being between God and humanity, but the removal of it also subjectively from within our human nature and understanding and life" (160). Like Barth, he is concerned to avoid all forms of Pelagianism or Arminianism, but the end result, as this statement and others like it make clear, is that the subjective has been completely subsumed within the objective. Atonement is "subjective" in that it occurs within the human nature that Christ has assumed, but it does not yet involve us personally and individually in the usual sense of subjective. And yet he will also speak of "atonement actualising itself, really and subjectively, within the personal lives of men

and women" (189). This is the work of the Spirit. Here we have a second use of "subjective," but there is a lack of clarity regarding the relation between the two. Moreover, if the first use holds true—that Christ in his objective atoning work has fulfilled the subjective side as well, irrespective of our personal response—then it becomes difficult to know how Torrance rejects universalism on the basis that "the sinner who refuses the divine love shatters himself or herself and is damned eternally" (189). But these are minor criticisms compared to the overwhelming display of theological acumen in these chapters.

On the whole, we are greatly in the debt of Walker and IVP Academic for the publication of these lectures. They represent the best of Torrance's theological thinking and are a fitting testament to his legacy as one of the towering figures in twentieth-century Protestant theology.

DAVID W. CONGDON
PRINCETON THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

God's Many-Splendored Image: Theological Anthropology for Christian Formation. By Nonna Verna Harrison. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2010, 207 pages.

In *God's Many-Splendored Image*, written for those outside academia, Nonna Verna Harrison draws upon her decades of research on theological anthropology in the early Church to present those aspects of patristic teaching on the image of God which are best able to combat the pessimistic anthropology so prevalent in the West today. Harrison, assistant professor of Church History at Saint Paul School of Theology and convert to Orthodoxy, seems particularly troubled by the simple identification of human nature with sinfulness, as though human nature were something to be ashamed of or at least apologized for. Humans may sin and fall short of God's glory, but Harrison insists that humans also share God's image and are called to obtain likeness to God by grace.

The chapter titles give a clear indication of their content: "Freedom," "God and Christ," "Spiritual Perception," "Virtues and Humility," "Royal Dignity," "Embodiment," "In the Created World," "Arts and Sciences," and "Community." Each chapter investigates a different aspect of the image of

God in humanity and follows a common structure. First, Harrison asks a question about human nature, usually chosen from a childhood memory or pop culture reference. Then, she offers reflections on that issue from the thought of early, Greek speaking Christians. Finally, she gives her own views on the question and practical steps for modern readers to take in order to realize these aspects of the image of God more fully in their own lives. Harrison concludes her book by acknowledging that the image of God cannot be confined to any single component of human life. The image, like the Archetype itself, is infinite and unfathomable.

Throughout, Harrison nimbly pulls from the writings of the Cappadocian Fathers (especially, Gregory of Nyssa), the desert fathers and mothers, Irenaeus, Evagrius, Maximus Confessor, and others to inform some possible answers to her questions about human nature. Following patristic metaphors, Harrison explores the image of God in humanity as a mirror meant to reflect God's glory, a jar meant to be filled with God, and a mediator meant to bridge the gap between creation and the Creator, among other examples.

Gregory of Nyssa is of particular interest. As Harrison indicates, he—alone in early Christianity—argues against the practice of slavery. His logic is simple but profound. By identifying freedom as an integral component of the image of God, Nyssa questions why any human should presume to enslave one whom God meant to be free. In another instance, Gregory turns to the manifestation of God's image in human biology. He suggests that bi-pedalism differentiates humans from the rest of the animal kingdom by enabling humans to look up toward their Maker. Although such an argument becomes less impressive in light of modern scientific evidence of the overwhelming similarities between humans and other animals, his point still stands. The image of God is not something to be found solely in some intangible part of humanity; rather, the image pervades the human, making even the body something to be marveled at.

Harrison is able to find evidence of patristic contemplation for each chapter topic; however, the earlier chapters seem to cover material more immediately relevant to ancient Christians, while the later chapters tend to address topics of more recent interest for modern Christians. This leads to a possible complaint about the book. In addition to Greek sources, Har-

rison, strangely, also includes voices in the later chapters as varied as Francis of Assisi, Martin Luther King Jr., George MacDonald, Johannes Kepler, and Albert Einstein. Although these men help Harrison to explore more fully the relationship between God, humans, and creation, their inclusion strikes me as distracting and unnecessary. If, as the introduction indicates, the purpose of the book is to question "the popularized negative view [of humanity] by proposing a prophetic alternative grounded in early Greek Christian sources" (5), why are later Western (and sometimes even non-Christian and atheistic) sources used so liberally to make the point?

Nevertheless, Harrison's book is a joy to read. Her intimate acquaintance with patristic teaching on theological anthropology is evident throughout. This book, as intended, will be a great resource to non-academics who have questions about the uniqueness and purpose of humanity. Moreover, it is hard to imagine that even the most erudite scholar would not discover at least something new (either materially or spiritually) by reading this splendid work.

JEREMY DAVID WALLACE
PRINCETON THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

Sun of Righteousness, Arise! God's Future for Humanity and the Earth. By Jürgen Moltmann. Translated by Margaret Kohl. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2010, 254 pages.

Jürgen Moltmann is a German Protestant theologian best known for his *Theology of Hope*, first published in German in 1965. His voracious theological mind continues to produce compelling insights. *Sun of Righteousness, Arise! God's Future for Humanity and the Earth* consists of lectures and essays from the last ten years and is representative of Moltmann's effort to "bring out what is *specific, strange and special about the Christian faith*" (3). The book is divided into four parts; the first three continue the project he began in *In the End—the Beginning The Life of Hope* (2004), developing a "victim-orientated doctrine of justification" (4), and the last part dovetails with the project *Science and Wisdom* (2003) in an attempt to forge a *hermeneutics of nature* that can serve as a two-way bridge between the sciences and theology (4). While each chapter has its

own unique flavor, the volume as a whole remains coherent in its central exploration of how God involves himself with humanity in order to foster a future marked by righteousness and justice. He demonstrates anew how the future of God, humanity, and the earth are inextricably intertwined.

Within the first three sections, Moltmann continues his life-long project of recalibrating Christian understandings of justice and justification. In the first part, Moltmann characteristically insists on God's participation with exiles in their suffering. He seeks to articulate a Trinitarian theology whose political and sociological implications will prosper the poor and suffering (29–31) as well as a theological anthropology that fosters cooperation with nature in human dependence on, rather than domination of, the earth (32–4). For those who have read Moltmann before, this section offers a fresh Trinitarian approach to familiar themes; for those who have not read Moltmann, this section serves as a helpful gauge of the main emphases and directions of his thought.

He continues this trajectory in the second part by linking Christ's resurrection, the resurrection of the body, and the resurrection of nature. Rather than addressing the human longing for immortality, the promise of resurrection "is a response to the hunger for righteousness and justice" common to all creation (41). Moltmann has previously made it known that he wants to develop a theology that does not take cues from ancient philosophy, as he understands theologians such as Athanasius and Augustine to have done. In the present work, he so inhabits his own theology that he only draws such contrasts in passing. As a result, the present work has a more irenic tone than some of Moltmann's previous works but also seems to float free of the tradition. This might be just what Moltmann wants, though.

Some of the most compelling theological moves of the entire work come in the third and longest section. He demonstrates that the term "monotheism" engenders misunderstandings of the three main religions categorized under it as well as some religions considered "polytheistic." The nearly meaningless generality of the term creates unnecessary obstacles to genuine and fruitful inter-religious dialogue. While he recognizes points within Jewish and Christian history that have been marked by abuses derived from misapplications of their doctrine of God, he uncharacteristically

treats Islam through the lens of its radical, political instantiations. He acknowledges that, in certain forms, Judaism and Christianity also exhibit similar causes for concern but his treatment of those religions focuses more on their moderate theological traditions than does his treatment of Islam. At these points, footnotes for his sources would be helpful but none are provided. Nonetheless, Moltmann convincingly shows that religious study would benefit from less use of the term "monotheism."

In an effort to reframe interreligious dialogue, then, Moltmann provides a sermon on Psalm 82 entitled "Righteousness and Justice—the Measure of the Gods." While humans discuss among themselves the merit of each God, YHWH calls the gods to repent of their unjust rule. Moltmann insists that the question of whose god is real is settled not by a display of reason but by a display of justice. YHWH then judges the gods who favor wickedness; "the suffering of the oppressed is made the supreme standard—and that means the standard for 'the sons of the Most High' too" (125). By paralleling the judgment of the gods with the judgment of 'the sons of the Most High,' Moltmann turns the central concern of interreligious dialogue back on his audience: it is better to ask whether we are righteous and just rather than try to prove that our belief in God is right and justified.

From these premises, he builds a Trinitarian theology predicated on God's indwelling of creation as understood through Jewish Shekinah theology (101–15) and the "new trinitarian thinking" of the twentieth century (149–69). He focuses his ingenuity on the Trinitarian experience of community in church and creation alike. While his previous work has been informed by a Trinitarian perspective on Christology, pneumatology, and the doctrine of creation, here Trinitarian theology moves to the forefront. "The whole Trinity is the church's living space, not just the Holy Spirit" (162). Moreover, he emphasizes the mutuality of indwelling between God and his world that sets the eschatological trajectory of our history: "The redeemed creation finds in God its eternal living space, and God finds in redeemed creation his eternal dwelling place" (168).

In the fourth section, Moltmann considers the possibility of dialogue between theology and science as distinct disciplines. He does not pursue a natural theology *per se* but, consistent with his insistence that we engage each religion on its own terms, he seeks to develop an understand-

ing of the world as simultaneously and significantly creation and nature (202). While the church lives within the whole Trinity, creation does not yet. Moltmann avoids pantheism and panentheism in his evaluation of the world by relying on Romans 8 to focus special attention on the transformative effect of the "immanence of the transcendent divine Spirit" in the world (207). Though Moltmann does not draw the following parallel, one is led to consider the Trinitarian implications of the Son's unique preparation of humanity for mutual indwelling with God for the Spirit's unique preparation of all creation for the same. Through the Spirit's involvement, creation is opened to the future and prepared as the dwelling place of God, forms of life advance and organize themselves against transient chaos and death, and the sensible world is rendered spiritual (see 207–8).

Moreover, Moltmann's concern for victims leads him to call for a re-evaluation of evolutionary theory that still takes scientific evidence seriously. The narrative of a "'struggle for existence' knows only survivors and victims; but the God of the crucified Christ is the saviour of the victims and the judge of the survivors" (223). Evolution looks backwards to understand nature while Moltmann implores his readers to look forward.

Moltmann accomplishes much in a relatively short book. While his theology has gone through different phases, *Sun of Righteousness, Arise!* continues his concern for the poor and victims and seeks to develop a doctrine of creation that is at once consistent with Christianity's doctrine of God, attentive to the poor and oppressed, and in dialogue with science. Moltmann continues to qualify himself for the Congregational Prize for Comprehensible Theology, awarded to him in 1988 by a church congregation in the little village of Sexau, Germany (see *A Broad Place* [2008], 336). Both those who have followed Moltmann's thought for decades and those who have never heard his name before will enjoy the fruitfulness of his theological mind displayed here and feel themselves drawn into his interminable hope for the future God has in store for humanity and the earth.

MELANIE WEBB
PRINCETON THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

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